

Amateur

NEW
NIKON
DSLRs First looks
of the D5
and D500



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Wild things

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In this issue

9 Not a quiet year for Nikon

Nikon's Dirk Jesper talks to Michael Topham about the company's strategy

10 Nikon D500

Michael Topham gets hands on with Nikon's most advanced DX-format DSLR to date

12 Nikon D5

We take a first look at the new FX-format DSLR

16 Food, glorious food

You don't need a lot of expensive gear to shoot great images of food, as Michael Powell explains

27 Wild man

Wildlife photographer Elliott Neep explains how he takes his fantastic animal pictures

32 Meet & greet

Michael Chapman talks about his 'We Met As Strangers' photo project

36 Print legacy

Make your own personalised bound portfolio. Russ Barnes explains how

46 Evening class

Photoshop guru Martin Evening sorts out your photo-editing and post-processing problems

53 Snapsseed 2.0

We test a free editing tool for your smartphone or tablet that offers one of the most comprehensive feature sets of any app

Regulars

3 7 days

22 Inbox

42 Portfolio

50 Accessories

57 Technical support

82 Final Analysis



How patient are you? I ask this because in this issue we have a first look of the Nikon D500. This is the camera that will replace the D300 of 2007.

The D500 looks like the best DSLR camera with an APS-C sensor yet. But has it come too late, and what happened to the D400?

I also wonder how many of those Nikon D300 owners who have been crying out for a D400 have since jumped ship? It has been a

7days

A week in photography

long wait, and those wanting the latest features could have been tempted away from the Nikon stable. Many may have bought a Nikon D7000-series camera, or even gone full frame with the Nikon D610, and I'm sure a few will have bought Fujifilm X-T1 and Sony Alpha 7 cameras and will now be CSC owners.

However, the Nikon D500 looks like an amazing camera. Turn to pages 10-11 to read Michael Topham's thoughts on it.

Richard Sibley, deputy editor

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



H by Edis08

Canon EOS 60D, 50-500mm, 1/800sec at f/5.6, ISO 640

This image was uploaded to our

Flickr pool by AP reader Edis08 and

is a great example of a different

approach to street photography.

Edis08 has chosen a location with

strong light that highlights the most

important aspects of his subject –

the head and face. He has then

imported the shot into post-

production software and burned out

the areas around the head so the

viewer's eye is focused on the

features. By converting the image to

black & white, the expression and

lines of the face are emphasised,

giving the whole portrait a more

expressionist feel.

Edis08 has also gone in close to

the subject rather than including a

lot of unnecessary surrounding area

that could detract from what is an

engaging and intimate shot.

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Email: Send us a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to appicturedesk@timeinc.com.

CD/DVD: Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels at its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 23.

Via our online communities: Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints: Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 23.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

Peake pics on Flickr

British astronaut Tim Peake has shared photos on his Flickr stream that he has captured in space using a Nikon D4 DSLR. Peake received guidance on how to use the Nikon D4 before he embarked on his six-month mission on board the International Space Station in December. To view Tim's Flickr photos, visit www.flickr.com/photos/timeape.



Brits in frame

Winners of the 10th Annual Black & White Spider Awards included the UK's Samara Hicks, who won second place in the professional category, and Steve Gosling, who won nominations in four categories: abstract, architectural (left), nature and still life. The contest pulled in more than 7,500 entries. For more, visit thespiderawards.com/gallery/index.php.

Solar-powered camera

A solar-powered action camera that shoots 16-million-pixel stills and 4K movies is due to go on sale in the UK in March. The Solar X features a 16MP imaging sensor, a seven-element f/2.4 lens and a 6fps burst rate. The charging case is claimed to provide four hours of battery life, on top of the two supplied by the built-in battery. The UK price is unconfirmed, but in the US it costs about £295. Visit www.activeon.com/products/action-cam-4k-solar.



Go wild in 2016

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2016 – which Sir David Attenborough describes as 'the most prestigious event for any wildlife and stills photographer, anywhere' – is open for entries. It costs £30 to enter up to 25 images, but photographers

aged 17 and under can submit up to 10 images for free. The closing date is 25 February. Visit www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html.

Photography explosion

There are eight times as many photographers worldwide than there were a decade ago, following an explosion in smartphone usage, claims market analysts FutureSource Consulting. According to a poll of 4,251 people across the US, UK, France, Germany, Canada and Australia, 1.2 trillion images are captured annually.



WEEKEND PROJECT

Sell your old kit

With a raft of tasty camera gear announcements earlier this month at the CES technology show, and the inevitable arrival of more tempting kit this year, you may be thinking about parting with some of your current equipment to help fund a new purchase. When selling your camera kit through auction sites such as eBay, it's important to ensure you get the best price for your kit. Any capital is then maximised, allowing you to plough it back into buying some new equipment. Do your research, and see what price you can expect from similar kit on the second-hand market. Once you've got a rough idea of the value of your kit, set yourself a price you won't go below and stick to it. You are then ready to prepare your items for sale.

1 Give your camera or lens a thorough once-over, making sure everything's working as it should and noting any marks or scuffs. It's best to be as honest as possible for a clean transaction and to avoid any conflict with the buyer.

2 Make sure you photograph your kit well – poorly shot images aren't going to attract buyers. Show all angles and any issues, as well as the packaging supplied and any accessories that will be bundled with it.

BIG picture

Legendary musician David Bowie dies at the age of 69

There are very few musical artists who can claim to have remained 'relevant' right up until the time of their death, but with such a varied career, David Bowie, who died earlier this month, was a figure who was constantly ahead of the curve. His last album, *Black Star*, was released just days before his death from cancer, and was almost universally praised. Here we see a shot from one of Bowie's many forays into acting. *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), directed by Nicolas Roeg, tells the tale of an alien visiting earth in an attempt to find water for his dying planet. It was a role perfectly suited to Bowie's otherworldly persona and is now viewed as a cult classic. But, of course, he will always be remembered for his music. Time to dust off those old records.

Words & numbers

I would drown in objects if I didn't have the ability to photograph them

Martin Parr
Documentary photographer
born 1952

3 Buyers like to see a used camera's shutter count as it's a good marker of how heavily it can be used. There are various websites that will give you a count once you upload the latest JPEG to their site.

4 When you list your item, set a realistic shipping cost and insure the item for the purchase price as you don't want to be out of pocket if it goes missing. For high-value items, make sure you request a signature on delivery.

88%

of 18-24 year olds regularly take photos with their smartphones



Fuji reveals new X70 and updates X-E2

X-series 'super-telephoto' zoom



The new XF 100-400mm on a Fuji X-T1

FUJIFILM is set to launch its first 'super-telephoto' zoom for the X series. Due out in February, priced £1,399, the XF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 R LM OIS WR is designed to deliver the 35mm equivalent of a 152-609mm lens. The 21-element-in-14-groups lens boasts five ED lenses and a Super ED lens to help cut chromatic aberration. Weighing just under 1.4kg, the lens is built to deliver image stabilisation equivalent to 5 stops and resist water, dust and temperatures down to -10°C. The lens features 13 water and dust-resistant seals. Fuji has added a fluorine coating to the front lens element to help repel water and dirt. A kit that includes a 1.4x teleconverter will cost £1,499.

FUJIFILM has unveiled its smallest and lightest X-series camera with an APS-C-sized imaging sensor.

Borrowing many features from the X100T, the X70 sports an 18.5mm f/2.8 Fujinon (28mm equivalent) lens following calls from some photographers for a small, light camera capable of wideangle shots.

Aimed largely at street photographers, the X70 boasts a 16.3-million-pixel, X-Trans CMOS II imaging sensor and an EXR Processor II.

Due on sale in February in black and silver options, the £549 X70 is the first X-series camera to sport a touchscreen capable of rotating 180°.

The 3in screen carries a resolution of 1.04 million dots and the focusing ring on the lens doubles as a control ring to help the user access controls quickly. The camera weighs around 340g (which is 100g lighter than the X100T) and measures 112.5x64.4x44.4mm.

Meanwhile, Fujifilm has targeted professional photographers and enthusiasts by unveiling the X-E2S, a new 16.3MP APS-C-sensor-sized rangefinder-style compact system camera. Due out in February,

priced £549 (body only), new features include an improved grip shape to help users quickly change settings while holding the camera.

There is now an auto mode on/off switch, as well as a 'more intuitive' user interface, and seven function buttons on the top and back of the camera body can be customised to the user's needs. The electronic shutter is capable of exposure up to 1/320,000sec, says Fuji.

Improvements to the AF system include the addition of zone and wide/tracking options that deploy a 77-point AF area to help when shooting moving subjects.

Eye-detection AF is included in the X-E2S. The camera will also be available as a £749 kit with an 18-55mm lens.

A free firmware update will be available for the X-E2, which will be phased out.

The announcements coincided with the unveiling of Fuji's new X-series X-Pro2 flagship earlier this month (see News, AP 23 January).

The X-E2S will cost £549, body only



Zeiss enters mobile market

ZEISS used the CES technology show to showcase three lenses for mobile phones. Zeiss has joined forces with mobile phone accessory brand ExoLens to develop the first three lenses in a new range: a wideangle, a telephoto and a macro.

Due for launch in the second quarter of 2016, the lenses will initially only be compatible with the Apple iPhone 6/6s and iPhone 6 Plus/6s Plus, via customised mounting brackets. However, further compatible devices are planned.

'The impact of an image is decisively influenced by the lens and its technical properties,' said Dr Winfried Scherle, executive vice-president of Carl Zeiss AG.

'The collaboration with ExoLens gives us the opportunity to tap into new target groups and provide ambitious mobile phone photographers with high-quality tools to support their creativity.'

For details, visit www.exolens.com.



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UK wins Hasselblad Master honours

A UK photographer is among ten winners of the Hasselblad Masters Awards 2016, beating thousands of images along the way.

John Paul Evans, who triumphed in the wedding category, bagged a new Hasselblad camera along with 'Master' status following a public vote and judging by photographers and imaging experts.

'The Masters Awards have always been the ultimate showcase to capture talent that flourishes across the globe,' said Perry Oosting, CEO of Hasselblad, which this year celebrates its 75th anniversary.

'Our 2016 Masters has again demonstrated the outstanding skills out there across the entire spectrum of photo disciplines.'

Each of the winners now faces a fresh challenge: to create a unique set of images on the theme 'inspire' for the latest edition of the Hasselblad Masters commemorative book.



John Paul Evans' winning image in the wedding category

Product photographer Jonathan Beer, one of the judges, said: 'Picking my favourites from the 2016 finalists was immensely tough.'

'Some categories had obvious stand-out entries, but others were much closer to call.'

'Exciting creativity, backed up with technical excellence, was what I was looking for.'

Beer added: 'The Hasselblad Masters has always been one of the most prestigious competitions in the industry.'

'The winners can take pride in, and benefit from, the coveted title Hasselblad Master for the rest of their careers.'

'I cannot wait to see what the winners create for the 2016 Masters Book.'

Samsung cameras a no-show

SAMSUNG has fanned the flames of speculation that it has pulled the plug on its global camera business by failing to showcase any cameras at the recent CES technology show.

Speculation has been rife since the firm revealed plans before Christmas to pull out of the camera and camcorder markets in the UK and Germany.

After searching for the elusive cameras on the Samsung stand at the Las Vegas Convention Center, AP deputy technical editor Michael Topham said: 'I asked three members of staff on the stand whether there were any Samsung cameras on display, to which they all replied there were not.'

He added: 'I walked the stand myself and couldn't see any.'

Samsung declined to comment on the



It is 12 months since the South Korean giant announced an NX camera, the NX500

matter when AP sought a response from a representative in the UK.

In November, Samsung said it planned to phase out sales and marketing of digital cameras and camcorders in the UK due to a fall in demand.

The news followed reports that Samsung planned to discontinue the NX1 in Europe.

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot. By Tom Smallwood



EAST YORKSHIRE

RSPB seabird photography workshops

From March to August RSPB Bempton Cliffs is home to more than 200,000 seabirds, so if you're in the area why not try the regular bird photography taster workshops led by photographer Steve Race. Key species include puffins, gannets, kittiwakes, fulmars, guillemots, razorbills, herring gulls and shags.

Various dates in March and April, www.steverace.com

KICKSTARTER



Alexander von Wiedenbeck

Help fund a photography book of von Wiedenbeck's haunting images of children living in rubbish dumps and graveyards in the Philippines. Despite these appalling and scarcely imaginable circumstances, these children were so warm and open,' he explains.

bit.ly/hopekickstarter

BIRMINGHAM



Photography Show

Organise a visit to the UK's largest photography show, which includes lots of manufacturer and retail stands. There is also a programme of seminars and speakers, including Michael Freeman, Charlie Waite and former AP editor Damien Demolder.

From 19-22 March, www.photographyshow.com

LONDON



Alec Soth: Gathered Leaves

The Magnum member's first major exhibition in the UK features four of his projects from the past ten years, including 'Songbook', a group of large-scale photos first completed in 2005, and 'Gathered Leaves', a series of images from a road trip across the US.

Until 28 March, www.science-museum.org.uk/alecsoth

INTERNATIONAL



APOTY

Entries to this astronomy photography competition are being accepted from 29 February. The nine categories include Skyscapes, Aurorae, People and Space, Our Sun and Our Moon. There is also a Young Astronomy Photographer of the Year category for those under 16. Five images per entry.

Until 14 April, www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto

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SALE 50mm f/1.4 EX DG HSM

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70-300mm f/4-5.6 DG Macro

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70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM

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120-300mm F2.8 EX DG APO OS S

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* Finance Example: Purchase Price £2,349.00. No deposit. Leaves a balance of £2,349.00. This will equate to 48 monthly payments of £64.15. This loan will have a representative APR of 14.9%. You will pay back a total of £3,079.20 of which £730.20 is interest.

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Not a quiet year for Nikon

Michael Topham caught up with Nikon's **Dirk Jesper** to discuss the camera maker's future strategy, and finds out why 2015 'wasn't a quiet year' for **Nikon** in the imaging market

DURING our recent visit to the CES technology show, *Amateur Photographer* had an opportunity to interview Dirk Jesper, product manager for professional products and product planning at Nikon Europe. During our discussion, AP asked a series of questions, aiming to find out more about the Nikon D500 and Nikon D5 and the company's strategy in today's imaging market.

Last year was extremely quiet from Nikon, with only a couple of new DSLR announcements. Can you explain why? I can assure you 2015 wasn't a quiet year for us because, as you can see from our recent announcements, we were quite busy preparing new products. If you want to start with new line-ups and new technology, it takes a lot of time to bring something to the market, and the D500 and D5 are proof of that.

Can Nikon be clear about who it expects will use the D500, especially given it has quite a high price tag? The concept of the D500 from the beginning was to have a compact, agile and professional system. It's our DX-format flagship and it shares so much technology with the D5. For example, it has the very same autofocus system and the target audience comes automatically – we're looking at high-grade enthusiasts and professionals who, let's say, need to work with limited equipment and require something that's compact, yet need the performance of a professional camera. It's ideal for wildlife photographers who want to take advantage of the crop factor.

Why has CompactFlash been omitted from the Nikon D500 in favour of XQD? Well, that's a simple question because it's all about

performance. The CF cards that were part of the professional photography world for so long have actually reached the end of what's possible. You won't see CF cards becoming faster, whereas XQD is a format that is future-proof. The current generations of XQD cards available are several times faster than CF. Looking into the frame rates, the D500 can shoot at 10fps, whereas the D5 can shoot up to 14fps. This generates a lot of data that needs to get onto the card, and 4K video comes with huge file sizes. You need to handle that and you don't want to be slowed down because your card is lagging behind when it comes to transferring data. It's also important to get the data from the card onto your computer and into your workflow system quickly. XQD can be up to five times faster [than CF], depending on the card.

What does Nikon envisage the ultra-high ISOs on the D5 might be used for?

The high ISO that extends

beyond three million [on the Nikon D5] is not the main focus. The main focus is ISO 6,400–12,800 and up to ISO 51,200, and you'll get much better results there. This is the field that most sports photographers and journalists have to work in, and they often have to work in poor light conditions indoors and at events. You want to have images that are as clean as possible, so that's the focus. The fact that we can go up to three-million ISO is a side effect. It might be interesting for the military, police or surveillance use, but you can't expect the same clean image quality.

Why have we waited so long for a successor to the D300S? Did the tsunami in 2011 prevent Nikon launching a D400? No, absolutely not. The tsunami was a terrible catastrophe. It had an impact on our production, of course, but the development of cameras happens somewhere else. It hit our production sites in the Sendai district and, as you may remember, we had some delivery problems in certain segments after that, but we have fully recovered and it never had a negative impact on our development.

There are a few areas of the market that Nikon has yet to exploit – a large-sensor mirrorless camera and a large-sensor pocket compact are prime examples. Rival manufacturers are producing these types of cameras, which begs the question, when will Nikon do the same?

We are always considering and looking into what the market

needs and, trust me, we will follow that closely. Of course, I can't say anything about future product launches, but if we think the time is there to launch something in that field, we will do it.

What's Nikon's future in the CSC market? Is it a priority? Priority is a strong word because you can't have just one priority any more – that is no longer possible. The imaging market is diversifying more and more. I mean, recently we launched the KeyMission 360 camera, which also reflects that – it's a brand-new concept. So you have to find the balance, because the needs of our customers have become more diversified. There is the compact side on one hand, and then there is performance on the other. One of the reasons why mobile phones are so popular is that they are convenient – it's easy to use them to take pictures, and easy to share them. Everyone acknowledges the image quality isn't that great, but we try to close the gap between Instagram and sharing with SnapBridge.

Before Christmas, there was much speculation in the press that Nikon had bought Samsung's NX camera business. Are you able to give us a reaction to the many media reports about this? As you learn from the media, and also from official feedback, that was a hoax. There was never really anybody talking about it.

What's Nikon's strategy for 2016 and 2017?

Our strategy for the future is clear and simple: bring out the best imaging products that you can imagine. Nikon is also spreading out to other fields of business, but that is more medical and industry-related business, as you may have seen from my messaging earlier this year. But for imaging, we are a leader in that market, and we want to stay there.



Nikon's
Dirk Jesper (far left)
and AP's
Michael Topham



Durable
Built with rugged
magnesium-alloy and
carbon-fibre materials,
the D500 is dust
and water resistant.



Nikon D500

Nikon has finally announced the long-awaited successor to the D300S. **Michael Topham** gets his hands on the **D500** – Nikon's most advanced DX-format DSLR to date

At a glance

- 20.9-million-pixel, DX-format CMOS sensor
- ISO 100-51,200 (expandable to ISO 50-1,640,000)
- Expeed 5 image processor
- 153-point autofocus system
- 10fps continuous shooting
- 4K UHD movie recording
- SnapBridge support
- Price £1,729 (body only)

LAUNCHED at the same time that Nikon announced its new flagship D5 FX-format DSLR, the D500 has a similar relationship to the D5 that the Nikon D300 once had to the Nikon D3. The D500 sits above the D7200 in Nikon's DX-format line-up and is designed to offer the best of both worlds, offering advanced enthusiasts and professionals the benefits of the DX-format, such as smaller form factor and crop factor, while offering advanced pro features from the Nikon D5. Without further ado let's take a closer look at the D500 in much more detail.

Key features

The D500 features an all-new 20.9-million-pixel, CMOS, DX-format chip that has no optical low-pass filter. This is teamed up alongside Nikon's latest Expeed 5 image-processing engine that allows the D500 to shoot continuously at a blistering 10fps, with a 79-shot buffer when shooting 14-bit uncompressed raw files. Whereas the D300S has a rather conservative ISO range by today's standards, the D500 improves in this area by delivering a standard ISO sensitivity of 100-51200 that's expandable to 50-1,640,000.

Claimed by Nikon to be its 'best enthusiast DSLR offering', the D500 supports this statement with a truly impressive autofocus system. It inherits the Multi-CAM 20K autofocus module from the Nikon D5, meaning it has the same configuration of 153 AF points that cover an extremely wide area of the frame. Out of the 153 AF points on offer, 99 of these are of the cross type. It's not only the number of points that

impresses, either. The advanced autofocus system enables the D500 to focus down to an impressive -4EV with the central point, and down to -3EV with all other points.

Another feature that ties in with the new autofocus system is the D500's 3.2in, 2,359,000-dot touchscreen. This allows users to reposition the focus point across the frame by simply tapping the screen, and there's the option to enable a touch-shutter function for those who'd like to fire the shutter by tapping the rear display.

Although the pre-production samples we used didn't allow us to navigate the menu using the touchscreen, I discovered that image comments can be made in this way. The screen is the tilting type as opposed to being fully articulated, with buttons lining the left of the body in a similar fashion to that of the Nikon D7200.

Directly above the screen is the D500's optical viewfinder that provides 100% coverage of the frame. The viewfinder has an impressive 1x magnification and

offers dioptre adjustment from -2.0 to +1.0m.

As well as appealing to advanced stills photographers, Nikon has targeted videographers and those who'd like to record high-quality movies by equipping the D500 with 4K UHD video. The D500 can record 4K UHD (3,840x2,160) footage at 30p/25p/24p, with the option to also record 1,080/60p. Unlike the Nikon D5, which can only record a maximum of three minutes' 4K footage, the D500 can record for up to 29 minutes and 59 seconds.

The D500 also allows users to generate 4K UHD time-lapse movies within the camera – a first for any Nikon DSLR. Both a headphone and a 3.5mm mic port feature at the side of the body, and users will find the movie-record button is conveniently located next to the on/off switch.

Elsewhere, the D500 introduces a new type of connectivity that Nikon has named SnapBridge. The idea of this technology is to offer a better link between the camera and mobile devices, and requires users to install a SnapBridge app that will be made available as a free download. As explained in our interview with Nikon's Dirk Jesper (see page 9), one of the major benefits of SnapBridge is that it

**Dual slots**

The D500 has a dual card slot design and accepts SD and XQD cards. XQD cards offer faster read/write speeds to keep up with the D500's impressive 10fps burst.

uses the power of Bluetooth technology to ensure you're always connected to the D500. Nikon has made sure users still have the opportunity to transfer large-size files using Wi-Fi, and SnapBridge is one of the many new features we're looking forward to testing and finding out how well it works when our review sample arrives.

So what else is new? An MB-D17 vertical grip will be made available for those who'd like to increase shooting stamina, and the camera will accept Nikon's EN-EL15 rechargeable Li-ion batteries. One slightly controversial idea is the arrangement of an XQD slot alongside an SD card slot. Nikon has opted for the ahead of twin SD card slots or a

single slot for SD media and a single slot for CompactFlash.

According to Nikon, CompactFlash has reached the end of what's possible in terms of speed, and XQD is a more future-proof solution in the long term. Those looking at the D500 with great interest will want to bear in mind that adding a few XQD cards to your basket could see the price escalate. The D500 will hit the shops in March, costing £1,729 (body only) or £2,479 with the AF-S 16-80mm f/2.8-4G VR ED.

'One of the major benefits of SnapBridge is that it uses the power of Bluetooth to ensure you're always connected'



Nikon showcased the shell of the D500's body behind glass at the official launch

First impressions

Right: AP's Michael Topham tries out the new D500 at the CES technology show in Las Vegas

THE ARRIVAL of the D500 has caught many by surprise, especially those who thought the next DX-format DSLR from Nikon might be the replacement for the entry-level D3300. With a good amount of time to get hands on and explore it, I can report that the top-plate is neatly laid out and has more of an advanced, professional feel than Nikon's other DX-format DSLRs. By repositioning the mode button to the left of the body, Nikon has created space for a dedicated ISO button directly behind the on/off switch. A large top-plate LCD panel features just like it did on the D300/D300s, although there's no built-in pop-up flash. To tie in with the launch of the D500 and D5, Nikon has also announced a new flagship SB-5000 Speedlight, which combines the power of the SB-910 in a smaller, more compact package.

Like the Nikon D5, the D500's autofocus system is one of the most impressive features. I found there was simply no hesitation or delay at acquiring focus in what can only best be described as unfavourable lighting conditions. The fact that the D500 features such an advanced autofocus system means serious enthusiasts looking to progress from an entry-level model or, say, the D7200, now have the same focusing performance available to them as professionals using Nikon's FX-format full-frame flagship DSLR – the D5. I was impressed by the touchscreen's responsiveness to light touches when I experimented moving the AF point, and its 170° viewing angle makes it particularly good for shooting overhead.

Although the level of weather sealing and robustness isn't expected to be quite in the same league as the Nikon D5, the D500 serves as a tempting choice for Nikon users searching for a more advanced DX-format DSLR without jumping up to full frame. I can see the Nikon D500 being an extremely popular DX-format DSLR with serious enthusiasts, and it's also likely to fall into the hands of some working pros who'd like to use a smaller and lighter model. The Nikon D500's crop factor (1.5x) and longer video-recording possibilities are other reasons for professionals to take a closer look.

It has been a long time coming, but it's fantastic to see that the successor to the popular D300/D300S is finally here. It doesn't look or feel like it'll disappoint.

Nikon D5

After talk of its development, **Nikon** has finally announced its most powerful DSLR. **Michael Topham** lays his hands on the mighty Nikon D5



IN NOVEMBER last year, Nikon announced that it was in the late stages of developing a new flagship model in its FX-format range. A few months down the line and we've seen Nikon unveil the D5 – a DSLR that's set to improve upon the D4S by bringing an improved level of performance to professionals. Although its high price tag of £5,199 body only will put it out of reach of many, the D5 is worthy of a closer look as it introduces Nikon's latest advances in technology.

Features

The D5 is very much a case of 'out with the old and in with the new'. Unlike the Nikon D4S, which is equipped with a 16.2-million-pixel full-frame sensor, the D5 introduces a brand-new FX-format sensor with an effective resolution of 20.8 million pixels. The new sensor is designed to offer an improved ISO performance and enhanced colour reproduction. This superior sensitivity performance is reflected in the D5's ISO range, which runs from ISO 100–102,400 with the option to push it to an astounding ISO 3,280,000. In addition,

the D5 benefits from Nikon's new Expeed 5 image processor. This takes the camera to new heights, enabling it to shoot a continuous burst at up to 12fps with AF tracking. There's also the option to increase this to 14fps with fixed focus and exposure when the mirror is locked up. Other advantages of the D5's new processor and high-performance buffer allow it to shoot up to 200 NEF (raw) or large JPEG files during a high-speed burst. It's also said to be 25% more power efficient, with up to 3,780 shots possible from its EN-EL18a battery.

Nikon has raised the bar in terms of autofocus speed and accuracy by introducing a new Multi-CAM 20K autofocus module. This is identical to that found in the D500 and provides users with a complex arrangement of 153 AF points across the frame, 99 of these being of the cross type that are sensitive to both vertical and horizontal detail. The system is configurable to 153-point, 72-point and 25-point settings in continuous AF mode. All 153 focus points are compatible with AF-Nikkor lenses with an aperture of f/5.6 or faster, and the 15 central points work

ISO control
Nikon has made some changes to the positioning of buttons. The mode button has shifted to the left to create space for a new ISO button behind the on/off switch.

Dual slots
There will be the option to buy the D5 in two versions, each with dual slots to accept CompactFlash or XQD rather than having one slot for each card.



Function buttons
Two customisable function buttons have been added. One is located at the front next to the lens mount and the other is found beneath the OK button.

At a glance

- 20.8-million-pixel, FX-format CMOS sensor
- 153-point AF system
- ISO 100–102,400 (expandable to ISO 50–3,280,000)
- £5,199 body only



with an effective aperture of f/8.

The AF system is coupled to the camera's 180K-pixel RGB metering sensor – a combination that's said to set new standards in subject tracking. The D5 also boasts a new 3.2in, 2.36-million-dot LCD monitor that offers touch operation. You can use this to reposition the focus point in live view or acquire preset spot white balance data based on the selected area in the frame. The viewfinder appears similar to the D4S, but there have been a few changes. Magnification on the D5

AP's Michael Topham was one of the first to get hands on with the D5 at the official launch



A dissected D5 was displayed behind glass on the Nikon stand at the CES technology show

is down slightly, from 0.72x to 0.70x (when using a 50mm f/1.4 lens focused to infinity) and the viewfinder surround is removable, making it easier to attach accessories such as a rain hood.

For those who want to shoot video, Nikon has equipped the D5 with full HD video capture at 50/60p like the D4S, with the option to record 4K UHD movies (3840x2160) at a frame rate of 30p for a maximum of three minutes. There's the option to extract 8-million-pixel still images from this 4K footage and create time-lapse footage in 4K resolution. Elsewhere, the D5 is furnished with a SuperSpeed USB 3.0 port and faster Ethernet connection.

Build and handling

The body of the D5 is constructed from magnesium alloy with full weather sealing, and offers the same built-like-a-tank feel

in the hand that we're used to from Nikon's flagship models. Although it may look similar to the Nikon D4S, the D5's ergonomics have been tweaked to improve operation. There's a new Fn2 function button beside the lens mount and a third Fn3 button is found at the rear beneath the OK button. The drive mode button is now found where the ISO button once was and Nikon has removed the microphone record button, replacing this with the repositioned info button. The mode button has also shuffled over to the left where the bracketing and metering buttons are positioned. This has freed up space for an ISO button directly behind the shutter, which feels logical from behind the camera.

The Nikon D5 is available for pre-order and is expected to hit UK shores in March, at a similar time to when we can expect the D500 to arrive.

First impressions

THE D5'S arrival has been talked about for a while, but this doesn't take anything away from what looks and feels like Nikon's best DSLR to date. It manages to improve upon the resolution of the D4S and we're hopeful of seeing impressive gains in ISO performance when we come to test it. During an interview with Nikon (see page 9), Dirk Jesper, product manager for professional products and product planning at Nikon Europe, told us that although the ISO extends beyond three million this will not be the main focus for professional sports photographers and journalists who frequently find themselves working in poor light conditions. He went on to say 'the main focus will be from ISO 6,400-12,800'.

The D5's immediate autofocus response combined with the vast number of AF points around the frame is outstanding, and the staggering speeds of continuous shooting left me somewhat mesmerised after my hands-on experience. For professionals who demand nothing but the best accuracy, speed and performance, the D5 appears to tick all the right boxes. Although we have yet to put it through the lab and test it thoroughly, the new features seem as though they justify an upgrade from the D4/D4S, and there's plenty for professional photographers to get excited about. To give credit where credit is due, it's also fantastic to see Nikon employing advanced features such as the 153-point autofocus system from the D5 into other DSLRs in the line-up such as the D500. Serious enthusiasts looking to progress from an entry-level model, or D7200, say, now have the same focusing performance available to them as professionals using the Nikon D5.

Nikon D5: Does the three-minute 4K limit matter?

ONE OF the key features of the Nikon D5 is its ability to shoot 4K UHD video footage. However, a closer inspection of the specification reveals that it can only shoot at this resolution for a maximum of three minutes. Many videographers bemoaned this as not being long enough. The argument is that while the times are rare that you would use a clip longer than three minutes, for situations such as interviews or live performances you need to have the option to record for longer, even if the footage eventually used is only a few seconds long.

This begs the question – is the three-minute maximum record time on the Nikon D5 a deal breaker? The answer, as with most things to do with photography and filmmaking, is that it entirely depends on what you shoot. If you are doing live music or sports events, or recording a documentary with lots of interviews, then the Nikon D5 isn't going to be for you, at least not if you want to shoot in 4K (the camera can shoot for as long as 10 or 20 minutes in 1080p, depending on the quality of footage). However, for narrative work or travel documentaries, then the D5 should be suitable. Also, let's not forget that the camera has a live HDMI output that allows for 4:2:2 footage to be captured to an external recorder, although we don't yet know at what point the camera will turn off due to overheating.

During our interview with Nikon at CES 2016, we asked if the company could tell us why the Nikon D5 is limited to recording three minutes of 4K footage and whether it has anything to do with the weather sealing of the camera? Nikon replied, 'No, it has nothing to do with the weather sealing of the camera. It's a matter of processing and the heat that is generated during processing. We work with a crop on the sensor for the 4K, however the primary concept and idea of this camera is not about video. The D500 goes the full half an hour (29mins 59secs), but the focus was different here. Based upon the feedback of the users of this camera [the Nikon D5], who are mostly journalists and sports photographers, they tend to record short snippets rather than lengthy live coverage'.

Users of the Nikon D5 can't record 4K UHD video for longer than three minutes





Viewpoint

Jon Bentley

Developing a photograph is comparable to creating a meal. Jon frees his imagination and creates concepts to whet a commissioning editor's appetite

I've always been struck by the similarities between traditional photographic techniques and cooking. Marshalling your ingredients before a spell in the kitchen feels similar to assembling the right chemicals and materials for a photographic darkroom session. In both pursuits, precise timing and the careful control of temperature are crucial for good results. Assessing when to lift a print from the developer as it emerges under the darkroom safelight is surely comparable to inspecting your biscuits baking in the oven and extracting them at the right moment.

So, instead of another cooking show, why don't we celebrate all the marvellous chemical processes of traditional photography? Here are some suggestions.

In 'Saturday Darkroom', an equivalent of *Saturday Kitchen*, enthusiasts might gather to discuss, for example, their cyanotype techniques. They can talk about how best to achieve an even spread of chemicals on the watercolour paper, what density of negative makes the grade, is sunlight better than studio lights for the exposure, are my blues better than yours, and so on?

Over on 'MasterPlate', a photographic version of *MasterChef*, contestants would compete to perfect the technique of pouring the collodion mixture over an ambrotype glass plate. Elsewhere in the schedule, a latter-day Keith Floyd would gush over the velvety shades and shadow detail of the platinotype he'd just made.

Meanwhile, 'Two Fat Photographers' would ride around the country on a motorbike and sidecar, exposing their tintype plates to a grateful public, who'd respond with glee as their portraits were warmed over a spirit lamp to get the varnish at the right temperature for a durable and memorable likeness.

Incidentally, for those processes that need subdued lighting or darkness, I'd shoot the programmes, by contrast, using the latest technology – like Canon's ME20F-SH video camera, for example, which records high-quality colour images at 4,000,000 ISO with a minimum subject illumination of only 0.0005 lux.

The pinnacle of the genre, of course, would be the photo equivalent of *The Great British Bake Off*. At a West Country hotel, contestants would compete to master the arcane arts of polishing a daguerreotype plate and sensitising it with silver iodide, or the delicate skills of coating some cotton paper with egg white and salt to form the base of an albumen print.

And with every task, participants would also take pictures using traditional cameras, and be judged on the wider challenge of image composition. Just like the best cooking programmes, it would be a heady combination of creativity, jeopardy, talent and fascinating techniques you can try at home.

Jon Bentley is a TV producer and presenter best known for *Top Gear* and Channel 5's *The Gadget Show*



Is photography due some time in the TV spotlight?

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 23 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



Lee Miller: A Woman's War

By Hilary Roberts, Thames & Hudson, £29.95, hardback, 224 pages, ISBN 978-0-50051-818-2

WHEN we think back to times of war, the men who fearlessly gave their lives for their country usually spring to mind. However, in recent years we've been seeing an attempt to redress the gender balance and seek out the many ways in which women played their part in the war effort. A cursory internet glance reveals countless women war photographers, which begs the question, 'Why has it taken so long for them to gain recognition?' Perhaps most notable among them is Lee Miller, the American photographer best known for her contributions to fashion and fine art. Thanks largely to her son Antony Penrose, we get a clearer idea of her work as a correspondent during the Second World War. This fascinating volume draws together her images of women, whose lives were affected by the bloody blight of conflict. Every image is accompanied by a caption placing each in context and revealing the stories that would otherwise get lost within the muddled annals of history. ★★★★★

Self Publish, Be Happy

By Bruno Ceschel, Aperture, £19.95, paperback, 512 pages, ISBN 978-1-59711-344-1



PERHAPS one of the biggest recent revolutions in the world of photography has revolved not around advances in camera technology but rather in the advances of publishing. Self-publishing has entered a true golden age and standing at the forefront of this is *Self Publish, Be Happy* (SPBH), founded by Bruno Ceschel. The small independent company is known for working with emerging artists to publish beautiful handmade (and highly collectible) volumes of their work. The book, as the title suggests, is a guide to making your own books and a stirring call-to-arms to engage in the DIY revolution. Ceschel offers a series of case studies and looks at what the artists were attempting to create, and the methods and theory that underpin those endeavours. This is a lovely, timely book. ★★★★★



© Wayne Johns

Win! a place on our pro photography workshop with two of the UK's best portrait photographers

PLUS try the latest kit from Fujifilm

JOIN Fujifilm and *Amateur Photographer* on 19 February, as part of an extremely select group of readers, who get to try out the latest Fujifilm gear in a portrait studio session under the expert guidance of professionals Jim Marks and Wayne Johns.

Winners will be issued the latest Fujifilm pro camera, plus a choice of lenses to try out, while picking up studio tips and learning techniques from two of the UK's finest portrait photographers.

There will also be refreshments and goody bags to take home.

When 19 February **Where** Central London
Closing Date 31 January 2016



Wayne Johns

Fashion, beauty, advertising and portrait photographer Wayne is best known for his artistic approach, and crisp and emotive imagery. Internationally respected as a master of lighting technique, and close attention to detail, Wayne is as in demand to teach workshops as he is from corporate clients wanting world-class images. His inspiration, enthusiasm and passion for creativity are fuelled by life and everything that has to offer. He is an artist with a camera and light.



Jim Marks

Jim has spent the past three decades lighting and directing the improbable, in a never-ending creative quest for the impossible. While peers have devoted their lives to medicine and law, Jim seeks out arresting images to sell you things you never knew you needed. From music to meatballs, entire TV series to game consoles, his focus is relentless. Any success he enjoys he puts down to one simple rule: 'Always strive to be the most enthusiastic idiot in the room.'



X-Photographers
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To enter this fantastic competition, visit
www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/fujiexperiencepro



Michael Powell

Michael trained as a press photographer and has worked for countless Fleet Street titles, which includes a 10-year stint at *The Times*. He started shooting food 10 years ago and has shot everything from pavlova to Pavarotti. He has been a finalist in both the Pink Lady Food Photography Awards and Arts Photographer of the Year. www.michaelpowell.com

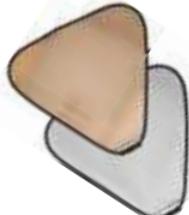


Natural light is often the perfect partner when it comes to making food photography look authentic

KIT LIST



◀ **Tilt-and-shift lens**
I use a Canon TS-E 90mm f/2.8 tilt-and-shift lens. I can control the plane of focus with the tilt, and the position of the subject in the frame using shift. With food, I often bring two elements of a dish not positioned together into focus and leave the rest untouched. It is manual-focus only and reminds me of the old FD lenses I used in the 1980s on a Canon F-1.



◀ Reflectors

I use everything from a tiny shaving mirror to a Lastolite 1.8m Panelite. The gold and white TriGrip is especially useful as I can place the straight edge on a table where the round ones slip off. The gold side is great for 'warming up' pastry.





Food, glorious food

You don't need a lot of expensive gear to shoot great images of food, as Michael Powell explains

While browsing in a charity shop recently, I came across a recipe book from the early 1980s. Leafing through it I was struck by how few recipes were illustrated with photographs. The few that were included, however, were studio lit, formal, shot around f/22 and immaculate to the point of sterility. Some of the dishes didn't look real, and probably weren't, since all kinds of techniques were deployed back then to tart up tarts and fluff up pheasants. Instant mash, for example, was commonly used in place of ice cream as it was often fluid under the studio lights.

Thankfully, people soon realised that cookery didn't need intimidating Haynes-style manuals, as best-seller lists overflowed with recipe books written by chefs who understood that most people were too busy or too tired to spend half a day preparing supper. The recipe seemed achievable, and with an emphasis on photography it looked it too. Writers and chefs started talking about flavour, freshness, informality, simplicity and speed.

I work mostly in editorial, illustrating tasty recipes that don't require *MasterChef* and Michelin-star talent to cook it. Almost all of it is shot inside the home of the chef and very rarely in my studio. Flash gear usually stays in the car boot, as natural light is so often a perfect partner to natural food. Bouncing, reflecting, directing, flagging and generally controlling it to suit the food is my objective – and it's where the fun begins.

Lighting

Photographers often baffle others by pointing out nice light, perhaps the setting sun's raking effect and long shadows. That second-nature observational skill is a vital asset when photographing food, so if the light is gorgeous



Wi-Fi card and iPad

I like to react quickly to the light, so I prefer not to shoot tethered. A Wi-Fi SD card set to best JPEG is a simple way to let everybody in the room see what I am shooting. The CF slot is set to record raw only.



Expodisc

I find inaccurate food colours as jarring as colour casts on skin tones, so I set custom white balances using an Expodisc for good colour rendition and to speed up my raw workflow later.

Wet Wipes, lens wipes and kitchen roll



A cheap bit of kit here, but still essential. Food is messy, greasy and sticky, and is easily transferred to your gear, so the Wet Wipes are for my hands, the lens wipes for my iPad, and the kitchen roll for touching up unwanted spots and spillage on plates and props.

in the sitting room at 11am, I'll be set up and ready, but by 4pm I might have moved to the study on the other side of the house via the kitchen and landing.

Often I'll shoot a dish, then spot completely different light when taking the plate back to the kitchen and quickly start again. I often need to shoot pictures that can be used seasonally; Easter cakes, asparagus for spring, turkeys for Christmas, and always at the wrong time of the year. I once shot a bonfire-night-themed soup in June in a downstairs loo, complete with sparklers to get a long enough exposure. Food goes off quickly, so I like to get the safe shot and then start experimenting.

That charity-shop cookbook from the early '80s is testament to the skill and inventiveness of large-format transparency studio photography, albeit with a little fakery. I wouldn't have fancied biting into



Keep an eye out for interesting backgrounds and props to enhance your shots

the apple painted with nail polish, or the ice cream made from Cadbury's Smash, so it stands to reason that as much as great ingredients produce great food, lovely pictures are easier to create of lovely food. If you can't wait to reach for the knife and fork, that means it will probably photograph well. Virtually all the food created is eaten during and at the end



'I once shot a bonfire-night-themed soup in June in a downstairs loo, complete with sparklers to get a long enough exposure'



You don't need a good food stylist to take great shots, as inspiration is all around

Food styling

FOOD follows trends like anything else, so styling constantly evolves. Not everyone has a food stylist to hand, but luckily inspiration is all around. Food and interiors magazines are crammed with ideas. Shabby chic interiors have been a popular design trend for some time, and you can see its influence in food

photography. Textures are important right now, and the right food shot on stressed wood and vintage materials can look stunning.

Keep an eye out for interesting backgrounds and props, ready to bring them out at a moment's notice. Whether it's natural stone samples from a builder's merchant, unusual

surfaces from junk shops, fabrics from curtain makers, period plates and cutlery from antique dealers, napkins from a supermarket – all can lift a shot. Unexpected colours work well too. I see a lot of blue props in contemporary food photography and I think it works well because so little food is naturally that colour.

Reflectors and flags can be incredibly important to lift shadows in food and hold areas back





A 100mm macro lens is a great choice for food photography, offering a decent working distance

of the shoot. A talented chef and food stylist can make all the difference because, as well as having culinary skills, he or she is able to spot a potential problem on a plate when my brain is full of white balance and not whitebait. Rachel, who creates much of the food I photograph, has a hilarious skill for spotting rude shapes in food. She should have hosted *That's Life*.

Approach

I have achieved similar results to all the techniques mentioned here using just studio lighting, but somehow the pictures lacked the edge of realism required to convey home-cooked food.

I still use a Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, which I adore. I find the full-frame sensor ideal, especially when using the Canon TS-E 90mm f/2.8 lens. I try not to overuse its tilt-and-shift mechanism for effect, but it is really useful when controlling depth of field. We went through a very shallow depth of field trend for a while, but I tend to shoot mostly around f/4.5 and, where necessary, I use the tilt to bring parts of the dish that are important into focus, such as the main ingredient and perhaps a garnish or an accompanying



Turn off your camera's AF and try subtle movements back and forth until you achieve focus

dish further back in the frame.

I often shoot for editorial clients, so sometimes creating out-of-focus space in the frame pleases editors who like to overlay text. Another fine lens is the Canon 100mm f/2.8L Macro, which combines close focusing with a nice working distance and image stabilisation. I don't like using tripods and shoot handheld as much as I can before grabbing a monopod or tripod if light is fading. The usual rule about avoiding shake by using a shutter speed in excess of focal length applies more so with these lenses. I pride myself on a steady hand, but try to avoid slower

TOP TIPS



Work around the subject

This is the first piece of advice I was given when studying photojournalism more than 30 years ago, and it applies to food photography too. For commercial shots, I have to focus on the most important ingredient, but sometimes a better shot lurks elsewhere in the viewfinder: the crumbs, the pastry's texture, the beads of oil. This Christmas pudding shot was elevated by using a sieve to drop icing sugar. A slow sync speed was used to capture correct daylight exposure with a very small burst of flash from a radio-triggered Speedlite and a FlashBender attached to highlight streaks of falling sugar.



Reflectors and flags

I carry a lot of Lastolites, including a TriGrip and even a 1.8m Panelite, but my most frequently used reflectors are actually cheap mirrors, and the small shaving ones are brilliant at putting detail into darker foods and shadows. For these Chinese-baked chips with satay, I balanced direct sunshine from the right with a small mirror from the left. A black foam board flag was used behind the food to hide a distracting background and add contrast.



Turn off AF and get moving

There's a lot of depth in food front-to-back and top-to-bottom. That critical point of focus is easily missed by AF, and if the food is low in contrast the AF can frustratingly start to hunt. You don't have much time before that beautifully prepared fresh dish starts to resemble a heat-lamped motorway services meal. A contrasting focal point, such as herbs or croutons, can help with liquids such as soup. If the AF had settled on the wrong part of this crouton even slightly, the shot would not have worked. I liken it to the unsettling effect that focusing on the furthest eye has in portraiture.



Taking a look straight down can work particularly well with flat foods, such as tarts and pizza

than 1/125sec when shooting handheld.

My pictures are often used on trucks and exhibition stands at a width of three metres, so I have to be strict with myself when daylight tails off. The EOS-1Ds Mark III has two card slots and I usually shoot raw, but with food there's often a team around me (possibly including the client) who want to see what is going on. I dislike working tethered as I need to be able to suddenly set up elsewhere for better light, so I use the SD slot with a Wi-Fi-enabled card that allows me to ping fine JPEGs to my iPad, which then gets passed around the house.

AP



Change angle

Much food looks great shot at the angle we are used to seeing just before diving in with cutlery. However, take a look straight down too, particularly with flat foods such as pizza and tarts. A really low angle can add drama to taller and piled foods, but watch the background. These pasties were first shot on a dining table before we decided we liked the shapes seen from directly above. A small mirror has been used from the bottom to beam daylight back into the shaded side of the pasties.

Budget alternatives to the Canon TS-E 90mm

Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro

Hardly a budget lens at £600, but almost half the price of the TS-E, and it features IS where the TS-E doesn't.

Tamron 90mm f/2.8 Di VC USD Macro

The latest incarnation of this popular lens features both image stabilisation (VC) and Tamron's Ultrasonic Silent Drive (USD) for fast and quiet AF.

Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro

For those using a cropped sensor to create a short telephoto, the Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM is a great alternative.



Be adaptable

Changing light and weather can scupper your plans, so be prepared to change shot entirely if necessary. This means being in control of your equipment and having the technical skills to change tack completely. This parsnip and ginger winter pudding picture was a sudden change of mind, where I had to quickly balance daylight, very low power flash and flames from the hastily made fire. I needed a fairly slow exposure to catch the flames (1/25sec) and didn't really have time to set up a monopod or tripod, so I steadied myself and the camera on the back of a dining chair.

Beware of seeking perfection

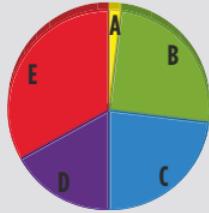
I DO USE Photoshop, but as with so much photography it often really is quicker to sort a compositional problem at source. Cover up a chip in your china with food and blot a splash with paper by all means, but remember you can end up removing the very thing that makes the dish appealing. When you have the safe shot, try digging in with cutlery as if about to eat to see if the shot improves.

Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year competition



THE CLOSING date for entries to the Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year 2016 is 7 February, so there's still time to get snapping for the world's most prestigious celebration of all that is special and significant about food photography and film.

The competition is open to everyone – professionals and amateurs – and awards £10,000 worth of prizes. The overall winner scoops the crown and £5,000, as well as two nights' accommodation in London to attend the exclusive VIP awards ceremony at London's Mall Galleries in April 2016, attended by all the finalists and winners. Visit pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com



In AP 9 January we asked

How many camera bags do you own?

You answered

A None	2%
B One to two	25%
C Three	23%
D Four	17%
E Five plus	33%

What you said

'I own three bags, but two are used purely for in-house storage. I never seem to find the right fit between capacity and comfort'

'Over the years I have owned loads of different carrying devices, from aluminium cases to backpacks, but none has ever been ideal for every occasion'

'I wish AP would do a serious comparative test of several variations (messenger, backpack, trolley) for each of the shooting situations (street, hiking, long-distance travel) and type of equipment. It's just a pain to order online, send it back and try another one'

'I've got everything – from one that just holds the camera, right up to monsters that can hold multiple bodies and lenses'

[Join the debate on the AP forum](#)

This week we ask

Would you lend your camera to a friend?

[Vote online](#) www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Guess the camera



Every other week we post a photograph of a camera on our Facebook page and all you have to do is guess the make and model. To guess the make and model of this camera (above), head over to www.facebook.com/Amateur.photographer.magazine.

Forum members can also enter via the forum.

The cover published in AP 9 January is from 5 May 1948. The winner is Bryan Metters from Lancashire, who guessed the correct date.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Learning from the masters

Recently I had time to catch up on the copies of *Amateur Photographer* awaiting my attention, and was very interested in the article on Luke Austin (AP 5 December 2015). The article was full of useful points, and I found a lot to think about. His photograph of the trees in the lake at Glenorchy, New Zealand, struck a particular chord with me, and I soon found my photograph taken from a similar spot back in August 2013. My original was in colour, and in hindsight not very well composed. The framing was less than ideal. After looking at Luke's version, I converted mine to black & white, cropped to improve the composition – and what a difference! It was an interesting exercise to be able to edit my shot having seen the same view taken by a professional. Obviously I did not have the misty weather that he did.

I attach both my original (top right) and edited version (right). Thank you, AP, once more for opening my eyes.

Jayne Pochin, via email

That's an interesting concept. We are thinking of doing something similar in AP where a few staff members all edit the same photo and we see just how different the results are, and why they have made the edits they



Jayne's original (top) and edited version of her image of the lake at Glenorchy in New Zealand

have. There is never just one solution, as everyone adds their own interpretation

– **Richard Sibley, deputy editor**



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Reality check

You publish many letters of the 'what a great mag/article' variety and I'm not normally a person with a negative outlook. I'm sure your *Top tips for 2016* feature (AP 19–26 December 2015) had some great shots and some good advice, but it missed out some essential nuggets. The landscape section provided well-balanced and useful advice. The portrait section forgot the advice to hire a glamorous model. The architecture section omitted to mention a visit to Paris or some other

exotic location with tall buildings and colourful staircases. The wildlife section did mention the three Ps, but forgot to mention taking along your 600mm lens. The travel section had some good tips for photography in Vietnam.

Finally, the action section had some great advice on positioning, but forgot to provide advice on how to acquire an event photographer's pass for close up action of Usain Bolt. I understand aspiration, but let's keep it real, please.

Stuart Taylor, via email

Thanks for your feedback, Stuart. As you can appreciate, with limited space we have to be realistic about what we can fit in each issue. With that in mind, the feature wasn't designed to be an authoritative piece for a host of subjects, but instead it was aimed at offering inspiration and useful bits of advice that we've covered over the past year.

While many of the images are certainly aspirational, the advice is absolutely transferable to your own

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The Legend of the Legacy is a celebration of the last 30 years of the history of Grays of Westminster and tells the extraordinary story of its development from a tiny mail order business with modest beginnings to its present incarnation as a unique company that looks after more than 49,000 customers worldwide.

Gillian Greenwood superbly illustrated account offers a fascinating view of the singular Nikon-only camera shop and her anecdotal style provides an in-depth understanding of just what makes Grays of Westminster tick. She vividly describes the building, the man who founded the company, the people who run the shop and some of its famous visitors.

The Forward is by the President of the Nikon Corporation of Japan.

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Wild man

Through his understanding of the natural world, wildlife photographer **Elliott Neep** is able to get to the heart of his subjects. He talks to **Jade Lord** about the techniques and methods that allow him to create such engaging images



Mature lion
(*Panthera leo*
nubica). One of two
brothers, yawning
in dawn sunlight,
Masai Mara National
Reserve, Kenya

From the vast open planes of the Mara Serengeti to the more humble fields on his south Oxfordshire doorstep, wherever the location, Elliott Neep manages to capture the true spirit and character of every animal he photographs. It's a notoriously difficult feat, so how does he do it? Elliott's skill lies in the fact that he is as much a naturalist as he is a photographer, using his knowledge of animal behaviour to get the shots that count.

'The more you can learn about your subject, the more you can anticipate and predict the animal's behaviour,' explains Elliott. 'For me, wildlife photography is all about capturing those special fleeting moments – whether it is a mother and cub coming into frame to nuzzle, or the moment a bird of prey takes flight. If you can recognise the signs and body language, you can shave valuable

seconds off your reaction time and be ready for the moment.'

Practice makes perfect

It has taken Elliott many years to fine-tune his craft. He spent his formative years practising his camera techniques on local flora, fungi, bugs and pond wildfowl, getting to know his camera inside and out so as not to miss a moment by fiddling with settings and controls. This means he now instinctively knows how to seize the opportunities he is presented with, be it in a hide or a vehicle on safari. This, alongside his knowledge of animal behaviour, has been crucial in ensuring his photos manage to capture not just the animal's profile, but its true character, too.

'All the time, I am thinking about capturing and revealing the character of the animal – what is most representative and familiar to that species,' reveals Elliott. 'I want



Left: Full-face close-up portrait of a red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), England

the animal to look relaxed and natural for portraits, so I'm looking for eye contact, a raised paw as the animal walks, ears alert and forward. If there is more than one animal, then I'm always



Left: A grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), scuttling along the back of a park bench, England

'There is no shortcut to this kind of wildlife photography, and there is no replacement for time in the field'

Right: Scottish blackface sheep (*Ovis aries*). A ram standing against the blue sky, Isle of Mull, Argyll and Bute

Below left: Two adult brown hares (*Lepus europaeus*), face to face in a frosty field, Rutland

Favourite locations in Britain

'THE ISLE of Mull is just spectacular as a wild place: it is mountainous, with deep, cutting valleys and sea lochs,' says Elliott. 'It is home to the golden eagle, white-tailed sea eagle, red deer and otters – four species synonymous with the wild. It is my go-to location for otters and I've come to know the coastline extremely well, even advising other photographers where to go. I never go there to photograph eagles as they are still out of reach, even with a 600mm prime lens, but I love seeing them soaring above and gliding through the valleys.'

'Skomer Island is another gem in the UK's wildlife crown. I prefer it to the Farne Islands for the Atlantic puffin as it is much larger and greener, with swathes of spring flowers, and the daily landings are more practical. You can also stay overnight to be there for sunrise and sunset, which is a stunning opportunity, and one I am looking forward to in June 2016.'



looking for interaction, whether it is mutual grooming between siblings, parents and young, or an aggressive territorial dispute. Facial expressions and motion really bring the images to life.'

A waiting game

Elliott stresses that this style of photography takes time and dedication if you are to get the best results. 'There is no shortcut to this kind of wildlife photography, and there is no replacement for time in the field,' he says. 'I focus my attention on one species. For example, I'll spend several months with the same fox family or badger family. Or I'll spend the entire summer, from dawn to dusk, in a couple of fields encountering the same roe deer and hares, learning their habits and favoured paths through the fields and hedgerows. In this way you capture a real depth of images. It is incomparably more productive than simply walking around and raising a lens to whatever you find. If you just walk around the same patch too often, the wild animals will take evasive

steps and change their routines to avoid contact.'

While this may be easy when taking photos close to home, it is decidedly more difficult abroad, but Elliott says the same principles apply – you still have to spend more time actually observing wildlife than taking photos of it.

Elliott is abroad a lot. He works as a guide for Oryx Photography (a wildlife photography tour operator in South Africa), and so has been fortunate enough to become familiar with locations such as Kenya's Masai Mara, Tanzania's Serengeti, Rwanda, the tiger reserves in central and northern India, and the high Arctic and Antarctica. Each tour generally only lasts 10–14 days, but he is never tempted to rapidly shoot everything he sees.

'From my first-ever safari, where I shot more than 10,000 frames, I have now become extremely selective and cherry-pick encounters with the best light or action sequences,' says Elliott. 'Now I may shoot fewer than a thousand frames with three camera





► bodies. Occasionally, I will be single-minded and follow the same pride or cheetah, but I rarely do this when I am leading a group as most people are not prepared to wait around for hours, if not days, with the same animals.'

And yet if those touring photographers were willing to stick around, they would find that this slow approach is key to getting the right composition to bring their wildlife photos to life. At a basic level, Elliott's composition technique is a standard approach honed during his years providing photographs for stock libraries. He grew used to composing his images for copy space, with space above the head in vertical portraits and space on the side for the subject to look into. This style, based on the rule of thirds, is seen by many as somewhat boring, but Elliott says it is a useful foundation from which to be creative with how you shoot, so long as you have given yourself enough time to experiment.

I push the boundaries of the rule of thirds, with compositions such as a 90:10 split for landscapes and contextual images [animals in their environment]. These images consist of just a strip of land at the bottom and a big sky, or vice versa,' he explains. 'In contrast to this, when I'm sitting with a pride of lions or a herd of zebra, I look for tight compositions with my Nikkor 600mm f/4, picking out isolating abstractions or patterns and lines.'

Elliott often achieves the latter by filling the frame with motion, using slow shutter speeds on his Nikon D800 and D800E to blur the movement of running animals or flocks of birds. He also favours a panoramic crop at 2:1 or 3:1, with the huge 36.3MP file on the D800 giving him the image quality and size to crop to that letterbox style.

Technique

Elliott is not one to try all these techniques in rapid succession. Rather, he is highly selective

Above: African lion (*Panthera leo nubica*) relaxing in the sunlight, underneath a stormy sky. **Photographed in the Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania**

Below: Searching for prey in the Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya

about when he releases the shutter. 'I am most definitely not a "machine-gunning" photographer who takes aim and hopes for the best,' he reveals. 'I am highly selective, picking moments that give me the body position I want: far front foot raised in stride to open the chest, eye contact (down the lens or another animal in frame), ears forward, and so on. I am also looking for great light: warm, golden light at either end of



'I am most definitely not a "machine-gunning" photographer who takes aim and hopes for the best. I am highly selective'

the day, side-lighting or back-lighting my subject.'

However, if the atmospheric conditions don't play ball, Elliott will make the most of his time in the field, such as using motion blurs when the light is low or poor.

'I love the rain,' reveals Elliott. 'I will always continue photographing in the rain, just throwing a cover or a jacket over my lens. I try to position the vehicle so I'm shooting into the light if possible, with a darker background so the raindrops stand out, and I use a slower shutter speed to blur the rain.'

Shoot responsibly

While Elliott is happy to make do with less than ideal conditions, he will never keep shooting if the animals are at risk, or if it means disturbing them unnecessarily.

'Only recently, several newspapers documented Richmond Park as a prime example where armies of photographers were disturbing the rut with little or no thought for the animals,' explains Elliott.

On safari, he is constantly assessing the scene and behaviour of the animals as they react to his presence. 'Once, an elephant I was riding on to get photos disturbed a mother tigress. I have never forgotten the feeling of shame and

have striven to avoid making the same mistake again,' admits Elliott.

Back in the UK, he uses field skills to stay undetected, such as shooting from hides and using camera traps, and he often uses food to attract wildlife. 'I do use food to attract particular wildlife subjects into range of cameras, whether they're remote or in my hand,' explains Elliott. 'I usually attract birds with various foods, such as seeds, nuts, fruit and mealworms, and badgers with earthworms and honey. I try to use naturally occurring food where possible, so this often means scraping roadkill off the road to attract foxes.'

Using food to attract wild animals is one that divides people. Elliott is keen to point out that he only uses this method with long-term projects with a long lead-in and lead-out, using enough food for the animals to be attracted to the vicinity, but not enough to create dependency.

For Elliott, that close interaction is as rewarding as seeing the final photographs. 'It's an absolute privilege to spend so much time in the company of these wild animals,' he says. It is this attitude that ensures he captures not just the appearance of the animals he photographs, but their spirit too. AP

Right: Wildebeest (*Connochaetes taurinus*) herd arriving at Simba Kopjes, Serengeti National Park, Tanzania



Elliott Neep is a photographer, guide and ardent conservationist. He has spent around 10 years studying the natural world, has been featured in several publications and has won a variety of awards for his work. To see more, visit www.elliottneep.com

In the bag

'In my bag, I usually have a super-wide zoom, like a 16-35mm f/4 VR, mid-telephoto 70-200mm, 200-400mm and Nikkor 600mm f/4 VR II prime, plus an external flashgun or two,' says Elliott. 'I use a Gitzo 1325 Series 3 tripod, beanbags and an Eckla Eagle door support system.'

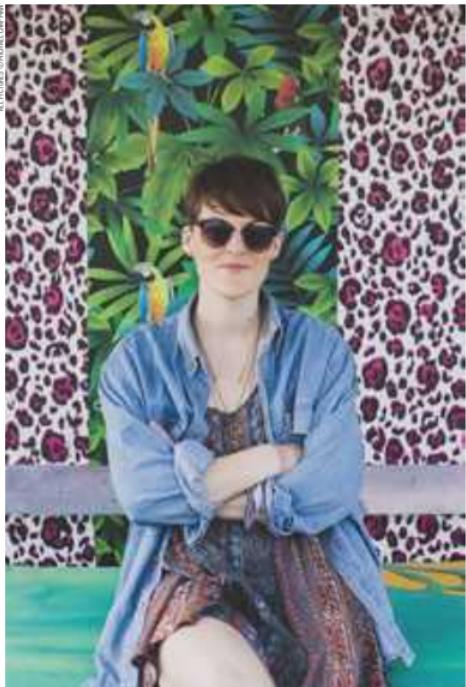
Recommended lenses

Wideangle lens for landscapes with huge skies, and for those moments where the animals approach really close.

Mid-range zoom (70-200mm or 75-300mm) will give you the flexibility to photograph herds, packs and landscape details.

Super-telephoto (400+mm) to get you into the action, frame-filters and birdlife. They also make great landscape lenses. Often you will see features in the landscape that photograph well as isolated graphic images: good examples are the classic silhouette of an acacia with the orb of the sun. On safari, Elliott's Nikkor 600mm f/4 VR II is permanently bolted to a camera body, as the image quality and ability to diffuse backgrounds make it an essential lens.





Sam, Marlow, Bucks
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm,
1/160sec at f/5, ISO 160



Meet & greet

Photographer to **Amy Davies** about 'We Met As Strangers', a project that saw him taking portraits of people he met online

The anonymous world of social media, particularly Twitter, where you can interact with thousands of people you've never actually met, sparked a fantastic idea for a photographic project for Michael Chapman. His project, 'We Met As Strangers', completed last year, featured 100 people he'd

Above left: Cath, Glastonbury Festival 2015, Somerset
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/4, ISO 100

Michael Chapman talks

previously never met, but all of whom he'd spoken to via Twitter. 'It got me curious about what would happen if you tried to take that interaction offline and how it would translate into a photograph,' Michael explains.

He quickly set some reasonably rigid rules for the project, which he stuck to throughout. First and

foremost, the participants had to be strangers. Second, and perhaps more interestingly, they had to volunteer, so Michael couldn't directly ask anybody to be photographed. He explains: 'I wanted people to volunteer, so it was a true representation of my [Twitter] following. If I'd been allowed to select participants, I would have tried to balance it further in terms of ethnicity, sex and so on. I think that could have polluted the sample. I was also curious about who would volunteer.'

Michael only used Twitter to source his volunteers. 'It seemed like a fast way of getting strangers to sign up,' he says, 'I also liked the idea of taking some of the preconceptions you get from someone's tweets and seeing how the person turned out.'

With a rule that people had to volunteer, there must have been an element of risk that there wouldn't be enough participants. 'I asked for people to sign up but couldn't ask people directly,' explains Michael. 'I started with my initial pool of 250 or so followers, and from there I had a few sign-ups with retweets and



shares from friends. Then, as I released people's photos and they shared them, it increased my pool.'

Meeting up

Each of the portrait sessions followed a particular pattern, starting with a coffee and a chat to get to know the person a little before the photo was taken. As you might imagine, the people who volunteered to be photographed had a set idea of how the portrait would look, but Michael says they tended to relax those feelings after meeting him.

Favouring an honest and relaxed approach, a small amount of direction was given to each subject. 'I would tell the participant where to sit or stand, but then I would allow them to pick where they looked and how they held their hands,' he says. 'They would often say they felt awkward and ask what to do, but I told them to embrace the awkwardness and stand in a way they felt comfortable. I would say "nice" if I got something good on camera, and mix up where I was photographing from.'

As anyone will attest who has



Above left: Jacob, Barbican, London
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/160sec at f/2, ISO 160

Above right: Ka, Holland Park, London
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/160sec at f/5.6, ISO 1000

Left: Adam, Covent Garden, London
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/4, ISO 200

struggled to get the portrait shot they want, sometimes something just isn't right. That's especially true with people who aren't used to being photographed. In such cases, Michael would ask the person to shift position or move to a different spot to try to get a better image - but still with minimal direction.

'The reason I chose not to direct

is that I wanted the pictures to really speak for themselves and further this idea of how someone would present themselves. I wanted to capture that in its purest sense,' he explains. He also admits, 'It made the job harder and more challenging, but in itself more rewarding.'

Interestingly, it was those who fill their Twitter and Instagram feeds with selfies that Michael found to be the most self-conscious when it came to somebody else photographing them. 'I think it's the element of control,' he reasons. 'You can see the image right away, take hundreds [of shots], apply a filter and change your angle. Often people pull the same poses because they know how they like to look. I am a stranger, who doesn't know them, capturing them at different moments, which can be mid-laugh, or in a place they wouldn't normally stand.'

At the other end of the spectrum, there were also volunteers who didn't like being photographed at all. They volunteered as a way to challenge or overcome their own fears, but at first it made



Michael a little more nervous than when photographing others. 'I didn't want to show them something they hated,' he says. 'But I think as I started the project, my confidence grew significantly, so by the end it was like photographing anyone else.'

Some of the photo shoots were completed in as little as 20 minutes, while others stretched out to hours. 'Some people I genuinely lost track of time with because they were so lovely,' explains Michael. 'With others, I got the shot but wanted to capture a few more. I would always send between five and ten shots to each participant, with me using one of them, and the rest they were able to use for whatever they wanted.'

Mission accomplished

The project started in January 2015, and was completed by October. Although at first Michael may have been worried about finding enough volunteers, by the end of it there were so many that not everybody who volunteered got to be photographed. 'I remember around July when I was advertising for my final 30 participants it got retweeted a stupid

amount of times so I had a ridiculous amount of sign-ups,' he recalls.

'I had a couple of volunteers who had to cancel, pull out or rearrange, but towards the end of the project I'd set myself a deadline, so I missed a few people.'

In the end, Michael had 100 different stranger portraits, taken in all manner of different locations, mainly across London. His favourite locations, he says, are the places he knows really well. 'It's Soho mainly, and I have explored so many back alleys and side streets. I think my second favourite is the South Bank, which is such a lovely place with so many striking bits,' he describes. 'To be honest, each location was great, especially those with real thought to them, the story of why they picked the location was magical.'

With 100 different shots taken over a fairly lengthy period of time, are there any that Michael isn't happy with? 'One of the best things I was ever told was that a successful commercial photographer should never be 100% happy with any photograph. So while I am happy with all 100 photos, I think all of them could be improved.'

Above left: Dean, Soho, London

Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/2.5, ISO 320

Above right: Mikey, South Bank, London

Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/125sec at f/3.2, ISO 2500

MICHAEL'S TOP TIPS

1 Make sure you like talking to people. You have to really engage with the subjects and throw a lot of energy at them. It can be very tiring, but you have to be really upbeat and energetic.

2 Be yourself, as it makes people so much more comfortable. I found making people laugh works for me, especially when I'm making fun of myself. Asking people about themselves is generally a good tactic as people usually like to talk about themselves.

3 In terms of composition, I'm a fan of leading lines and an uncomplicated background. I think it's important to make the subject stand out so you want to make sure it's not overly busy and complements what they're wearing.

4 I think a 50mm lens is great, as the photos tend to come out crisp and clear, and it forces you into the subject's space.

5 In terms of editing, keep it simple. I subtly alter colour balancing and shadows, as well as applying a quick skin brush to smooth it out a bit. I have made some presets to make the editing process a lot faster and can't recommend it enough.



For more information on the project, and Michael's other work, visit www.mjchapman.co.uk



Perhaps just as important is whether the participants are happy with their portraits. Generously, Michael gave each volunteer the power to veto a shot, or choose a different one from his preferred image – something which he felt was extremely important.

'Sometimes, to my frustration, I had a few strangers decide not to use the photo I wanted to use as the leading image, but I was also curious about how people would choose to portray themselves,' he explains.

Choosing just one photo out of 100 is naturally quite tricky, but Michael says: 'One of my favourites was the shot of @wtfmoke (Nick in Greenwich, above left). We were both hung-over when we met and I didn't stop laughing throughout our entire session together. I still remember it and it makes me smile.'

Michael's kit

In keeping with the simplistic ethos of the project, Michael's kit was also low key. He uses a Canon EOS 6D and an EF 50mm f/1.4 lens. There's no tripod, as he needs to be able to move around quickly, and he



worked only in natural light. Since finishing the project, Michael has kept in touch with many of the strangers. 'I've seen about 15 of them, and three have given me referrals to work with people or companies they know,' he says. 'I would say a few are becoming fast friends. Everyone was so lovely, though, and if I saw



Above left: Nick, Greenwich, London
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/3.5, ISO 100

Above right: Kristoff, Hilton Metropole, London
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/3.5, ISO 320

Left: Michael, Chiswick, London
Canon EOS 6D, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/5.6, ISO 5000

any of them in the street I would stop for a chat.'

Any kind of project of this nature should improve your skills, and Michael very much believes that his have progressed since the start of the challenge. 'I think when you look at my early photos and compare them to others, you can see a distinctive difference,' he says. 'I think my ability has shot up considerably. I still have a lot to learn, but feel undertaking the project has really pushed my ability.'

So, after completing such an interesting and unusual project, what's next for Michael? 'I'm going to be sourcing participants from Twitter again on some voluntary aspect, but they won't need to be strangers,' he says. 'I'm interested in further exploring the connections people make on Twitter, so it will be something very similar.'

Finally, for anybody thinking about taking on their own project, Michael offers these words of advice: 'Do it, and make sure it's something curious to you, and you feel passionately about it. It can be a lot of hard work and very time consuming, but it's worth it.'



Russ Barnes

Russ is a dedicated British Landscape photographer with a passion for trees. He brings an artistic approach to his photography and packs lots of different creative approaches into his work. See more on his website at www.russbarnes.co.uk

Print legacy

With an eye on the future and the probability of an all-digital legacy being lost forever, **Russ Barnes** reveals how he created a personalised bound portfolio

I have read many articles over the past year that examined the risks of an all-digital legacy. The crux and central theme of these views are that, as photographers, if we create a purely digital portfolio, then eventually it is at a real risk of being lost – in fact, it's pretty much guaranteed. All the backups in the world won't protect your photography if no one else knows how to view or access your images after you've gone. I certainly sat up and paid attention to this sentiment – it all seems so utterly pointless if we create JPEGs that even our own family take little more than a passing interest in.

My father was a great watercolour artist who unfortunately died suddenly in 1990. My view of his artistic talent is not just a vague memory or romantic notion I have from childhood. Twenty-six years on, some of his pictures are

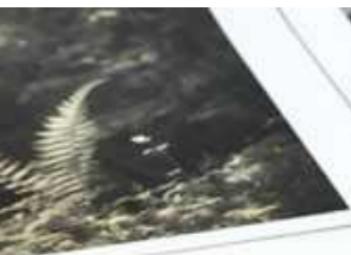


Russ gets inspiration from his father's watercolour work



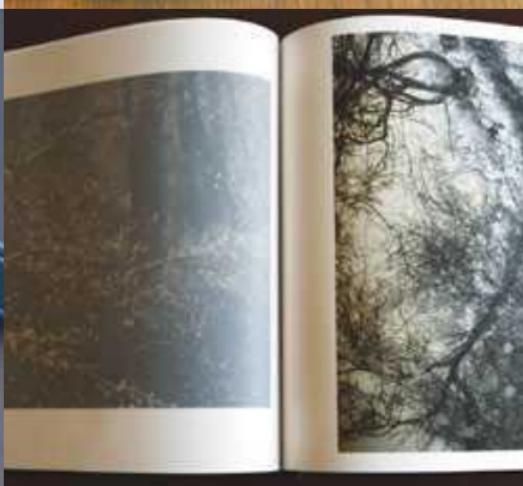
ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

Building a portfolio guarantees that your images will live on after you





It took a lot of work, but the results were well worth the effort



THINGS TO CONSIDER

I FOUND there were a surprising number of choices available for photography portfolios, and narrowing it down wasn't easy, mainly because in the beginning I didn't entirely know what I was looking for. I also made some mistakes by not thinking enough about how I would actually mount the images in the portfolio to construct the final product. Fortunately, through a degree of trial and error, I ended up with something I was exceptionally happy with. However, the journey wasn't without its pitfalls and frustrations.

The other thing to think about is whether to print your own images or outsource the process to one of a plethora of labs. In my view, printing your own work is essential to appreciate fully the true craft of what, to many people, photography is all about – the final print.

Why do I mention all this? Well it's simple really – planning is everything.



Personalisation

If you decide to go 'all in' on a fully bespoke portfolio, one of the first choices you need to make is how you want the portfolio to be labelled and titled. Fortunately, Hartnack & Company helped me a lot and provided an accurate proposal for sign-off before production.



Portfolio colours

One of my objectives was to ensure that the look and feel of the portfolio had a touch of class without eclipsing my photography. I chose a steel-grey Buckram cloth and charcoal contrasting inserts to ensure that all the focus remained on my photography.

on my walls and they are a constant reminder of his artistic work and impressions, and they are now deep-rooted in me. I don't care whether anyone else agrees with my view of his skill or not, as for me the evidence is there. One of my favourites, which I call 'Canadian Birches' (painted in 1967) is probably the reason why I'm compelled to photograph trees. So what am I creating for my children and others to remember me by? 'Not enough' is the simple answer – I want to leave behind something more than a couple of magazine covers and printed articles, nice as they are.

Reluctance to print

But why the general reluctance to print? Have we fooled ourselves into believing that digital photography is somehow cheap, disposable or worthless? I do wonder and have started to evaluate the excuses I've made in the past. I've convinced myself that part of the problem is available wall space – there's only so much real estate in my house for 80x60cm frames. I also feel narcissistic about printing and framing my own work for my own viewing – a feeling that I can't quite shed just yet.

So what's the answer? Well, other than getting your work professionally published, it's very simple – you have to take ownership and address this issue for yourself. I've begun to produce what I hope will be a series of printed portfolios while working on building towards exhibitions of framed work.

So where to begin? Above all, I wanted a professional portfolio. My criteria were pretty strict and the

benchmark was high: a level of quality in the product that would reflect the craft, time and effort I put into my photography; a bespoke design that I would have some control over; a durable product, something to last maybe 50 years or more. Finally, I wanted something visually strong with a timeless quality and lasting appeal, a tactile experience, but nothing that would leave my photography in the shade – a tricky balance to strike.

Level of exclusivity

I knew that meeting my list of demands wasn't going to be cheap, and I wanted a level of exclusivity. I didn't want to walk into WHSmith and see the product on the shelf being bought by any number of art students for their coursework. I don't take short cuts with my photography and I wanted it to be displayed in the best possible way, so after a week of questions back and forth to various suppliers I narrowed my choice to a family business based in Devon (Hartnack & Company), which created a bespoke product for me.

From design to delivery, the process took three weeks and I then had the start of something that looked like it would earn its place between Kenna and Strand on my bookshelves. Most of all though, it met my criteria as the beginnings of a real print legacy, something for my children and grandchildren to cast their eye over in years to come.

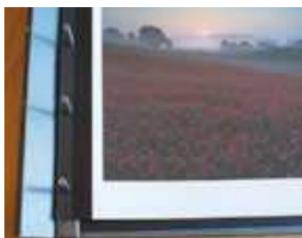
Image selection

I knew that filling the portfolio was going to be the most substantial and difficult part of the project.



Image selection

It might sound obvious, but image selection is critical, as is the sequencing of photographs throughout the portfolio. I worked hard on ensuring that I selected photographs that were representative of my work without being too repetitive.



Mounting decisions

I didn't think enough about mounting the prints at the outset. I decided late on that directly hole-punching my prints for a screw-post binding was a bad idea and then worried about how I could achieve it. Be clear from the start how you will fix your prints into the portfolio.



Concentrated minds at John Blakemore's bookmaking workshop

Handmade photo books

HAVING got the bug for producing printed portfolios, I looked at options to take things further and investigated the possibilities of handmade book making. Part of my attraction to photography is the artistic craft involved in the process, and with print in particular. I love the tangible aspect of a physical result. Printing is often seen as an add-on skill in photography, but to me it's an integral part of the image-creation process. Handmade books are just a further extension of that.

After excellent feedback from associates on Twitter, I booked myself onto master photographer John Blakemore's bookmaking workshop hoping to pick up the necessary skills needed to build my own volumes by hand. It was a wonderful weekend with perhaps the most interesting aspect focused on image sequencing and learning to tell a story with images. This is a highly recommended experience that has helped me look at my photography from a new angle.

I now have the skills to build any kind of book I wish from scratch, completely bespoke collections of work that fulfil my aim of producing something genuinely artistic and compelling to inspire others.



Volume

A decision on the number of prints featured was important. Too few and it would be a bit light, while too many would be overwhelming. I settled on 40 for my first project and used 30 in my second. Don't underestimate the physical weight of printed work, either.

KIT LIST



▲ Paper

Different papers produce vastly different results, so it's worth getting hold of some sample packs before embarking on a print project and making a final choice.



▲ Protective spray

Buying some protective spray for my prints proved to be invaluable. At £15 a can it might seem like another expense, but it ensures the print is shielded for handling.

▲ Mounting solution

On my initial project I didn't get my mounting solution right. Eventually I bought Flex-Hinge Polyester Sheet Protectors, but they were expensive. You need to think carefully about your mounting product selection.

It was important for me to have an outline high-level plan of what I really wanted to get out of it. Perhaps the most critical decision of all was the image selection – it should go without saying that the prints are everything, the core focus of the whole project. Not only would they need to match the standard of the very high-quality materials selected to house the work from a technical and presentation point of view, but also they would need to go beyond that and positively shine. The print needed to be king. I would be mortified if I got the impression that the slip case and binding outshone the contents. It needed to be the along the lines of, 'Wonderful photography. Oh, and I love the case.'

It took about three evenings to get to a point where I thought I'd nailed the selection and sequencing. In the end, a total of 40 images just felt right. The whole process was subject to a lot of reviewing and I changed the order a hundred times, deleted and added images, until I finally arrived at something I was happy with.

The flow was based on how textures, lines, patterns, colours, technique, atmosphere and even location played a part in trying to create a 'storyboard' of my photography. There's a degree of subtlety to the flow and, of course, it's



based on my own decision making, so some might disagree with the order and final selections, but I also wanted to have a strong back-to-front series as well as front-to-back. To my eye, I think I pulled it off – following the final print and construction I can honestly say I wouldn't change a thing.

After all the time and effort, it was finally there. It's genuinely something to be proud of and it certainly met my vision and objectives.

AP

Getting the look and feel of the portfolio makes a huge difference to the overall success of the project

The kit-based approach to consider

If you want a very satisfying professional finish, kit-based systems won't disappoint



I FOUND building my initial photography portfolio using bespoke options incredibly satisfying, but there's no doubt it wasn't the cheapest way of doing things. If you own a printer, there are a few suppliers who provide a more cost-effective kit-based approach to building a printed portfolio. So when I came to produce a further collection of images, I chose the Hahnemühle FineArt Inkjet Leather Album.

The advantage of this set-up is that everything is designed and created to work perfectly together for a beautiful end product. I opted for a 12x12in red-stitched leather screw-post portfolio. They provide translucent page dividers and, unusually, you can buy it with double-sided inkjet paper to create the look and feel of a book, should you be so inclined. The paper is also already hole-punched and scored, ready for assembly into the cover.

I must say the end result was incredibly impressive and delivered a very professional look while being more cost-effective than the bespoke approach. I will certainly be buying more of these to print my work.



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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



Mark Spokes, Hertfordshire

 Mark became interested in photography while on a trip to Canada when he was just 14. He kept hijacking his parents' camera, and from day one was hooked on image-making. While those early days found him shooting anything and everything, these days his focus tends to be on architecture and cityscapes. As you can see from these images, Mark enjoys bringing together architectural photography and long exposures, which he uses in order to remove the visual clutter (clouds, and so on) that can often occur in the sky.

War Memorial

1 Through the streaked clouds, Mark has created a representation of the soldiers' sacrifice as 'timeless' Canon EOS 40D, 17-40mm, 240secs at f/20, ISO 100, tripod, b&w ND filter

KD Tower

2 In this starkly minimalist shot, Mark has beautifully captured the former Kodak building in Hemet Hempstead Canon EOS 40D, 17-40mm, 45secs at f/22, ISO 100, tripod, b&w ND filter

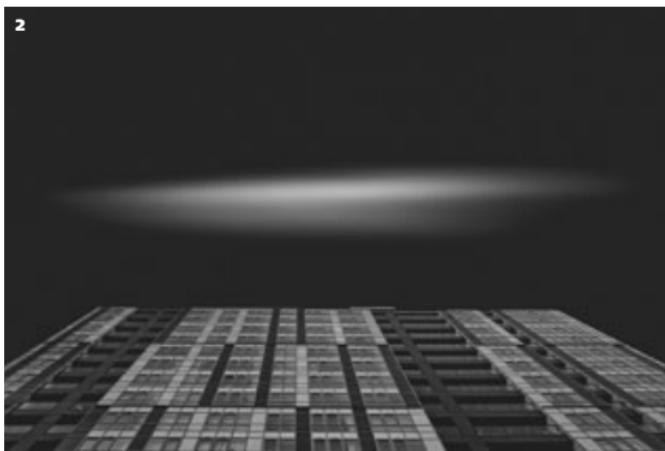


St John's Church

4 Not only did Mark hope to capture the clouds in this way, he also wanted the shadows of a nearby tree to impact the look of the building Canon EOS 40D, 17-40mm, 42secs at f/16, ISO 100, tripod, b&w ND filter

Bourne End

5 Here we see that minimalist doesn't have to mean black & white. Even with these bright tones, Mark conveys a similar feeling to his other shots Canon EOS 40D, 17-40mm, 1/250secs at f/11, ISO 100





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Submit your images

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Tree and Bridge

3 Mark has selected the first tree as his central subject and used the bridge to lead the viewer's eye
Canon EOS 40D, 17-40mm, 70secs at f/18, ISO 100, tripod, b&w ND filter

4



5





Paul Harrison, West Sussex



Paul is especially fond of what he terms 'remoteness and big skies'. Through his images he is able to pull the viewer in to these elements and make them feel as though they are standing there with him, observing the natural world. Paul loves being out in the open, with all the elements coming together, such as the weather, location, and technical details, to create the perfect photograph.



Pevensey Bay Sunset

1 For this shot I used a full wideangle to include the groynes in the scene, says Paul, and an open shutter to soften the water Pentax K-5, 10-20mm, 1/4sec at f/22, ISO 200, soft grey grad



Pentwyn Reservoir, Powys

2 'The early morning light and completely still water provided a brief moment of glass reflection on the lake,' says Paul. Pentax K-5, 10-20mm, 1/20sec at f/22, ISO 200, UV and grey grad filters

Blaen y Glyn Valley, Brecon

3 'I thought this image introduced a different perspective of this beautiful, remote location,' explains Paul. Pentax K-5, 10-20mm, 1/50sec at f/16, ISO 200, UV filter

Harrow Hill, Sussex Downs

4 Paul says this field in late summer represents a typical southerly walk across the many carefully tended paths offered for hikers and photography enthusiasts on the Sussex Downs. Sony NEX-3, 16-50mm, 1/125sec at f/20, ISO 200



Rapeseed Brooding Spring Storm

5 This simple grey/yellow colour scheme uses the brooding grey backdrop to the yellow rapeseed field. Pentax K-5, 14mm, f/22, ISO 200, light grey grad

Evening Class

Photoshop guru **Martin Evening** sorts out your photo-editing and post-processing problems

Manual perspective corrections

I LIKE the choice of viewpoint in this image, where Rob Deyes has deliberately positioned the camera at a low angle to get a worm's-eye view of the terraced houses running along the right of the frame. In doing so, he has managed to effectively hide the double yellow lines and emphasised the shiny cobblestones reflecting the yellow houses.

The 14–42mm lens Rob has used with his Panasonic Lumix DMC-G2 has led to some nasty barrel distortion and unfortunately there was no matching Camera Raw lens profile available with which to apply an automatic

lens correction to resolve this. I therefore had to rely on the manual Transform sliders in the Lens Corrections panel to correct the photograph. This worked rather well and you can see in the following steps how, by applying a positive Distortion slider adjustment, I was able to get the curved edges to align perfectly to the grid overlay.

Submit your images

Please see the 'Send us your pictures' section on page 3 for details or visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk



1 Apply an Upright adjustment

The easiest way to correct the perspective for a photograph such as this is to apply an Upright adjustment. I did this by going to the Lens Corrections panel and clicked on each of the Upright buttons in the Manual tab section to see which looked best. In this case, I found the Auto option worked best.



2 Transform adjustments

It's always a good idea to check the Enable Lens Profile option in the Profile tab, but when the lens data is missing, use the Transform sliders to compensate for any geometric distortion that's present. In this step I applied a +37 Distortion correction to remove the barrel distortion, and set the Aspect slider to -100 to stretch the image horizontally.



3 Basic tab adjustments

Finally, I cropped the photograph to trim and constrain the image area (and exclude the transparent pixels). Then I adjusted the Basic sliders to optimise the image and add more global contrast. I set Clarity to +38 to add more midtone contrast, and set Vibrance to +72 to boost the colour saturation.

Creating a Panorama Photo Merge

PHOTOSHOP CC users are able to access the latest Camera Raw 9 update that allows you to merge raw images either as an HDR (high dynamic range), or as a Panorama Photo Merge. Panorama stitching is normally carried out whenever you wish to create a super-wideangle view of a panorama, but it can also be used to increase an image size. For example, the photographs shown here were shot by Jess Maslen, who used a 58mm zoom lens setting to shoot five photographs that captured a panoramic sweep of the front view of a car. She intended to stitch the files together to create a bigger image. The Nikon D3100 used here will normally capture 14-million-pixel images, but Photo Merged results produced a cropped image that was 38 million pixels in size.



1 Select the photos you want to merge

I began in Adobe Bridge by making a selection of the five photographs that were needed to create a Photo Merge and chose File>Open in Camera Raw. This opened all the selected images via the Camera Raw dialog in Filmstrip mode where, from the Filmstrip menu, I selected Merge to Panorama.



2 Projection method

Selecting a projection method opened the Merge Preview, where I was given a choice of projection methods. I usually select Spherical or Cylindrical, but in this instance I found the Perspective mode worked best. I left the Auto Crop option unchecked so that I could manually crop later.



3 Apply Lens Correction adjustments

In Lens Corrections I rotated the image counter-clockwise and set the Aspect to +63 to squash the image horizontally. I then set the Horizontal slider to -26. Lastly, I applied a few Basic panel adjustments for tone and colour.



Camera Raw Panorama Photo Merge

THE CAMERA Raw Panorama Photo Merge feature can be a suitable replacement for the Photo Merge feature in Photoshop, or other third-party stitching programs. When you use Camera Raw to stitch raw images together, the resulting file will be a raw DNG master, where you will retain the ability to edit the photograph as if it were a regular raw

image. One of the problems I have found using Photoshop Photo Merge is that you can sometimes end up getting clipped highlights and have to start all over again (darkening the highlights of the source images first). With Camera Raw Panorama Photo Merge, you can edit/update the raw settings after you have created the photo merge and avoid any clipping.



With this method, you can edit the raw settings later

Martin Evening is a noted expert in both photography and digital imaging. He is well known in London for his fashion and beauty work, for which he has won several awards. Martin has worked with the Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom engineering teams over many years and is one of the founding members of a software design company. Visit www.martinevening.com

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Andy Westlake tries out handmade leather cases to suit a variety of cameras

At a glance

- Form-fitted cases for compacts and CSCs
- Handmade from leather
- Choice of colours
- Several versions available for each camera

IF YOU'VE just bought a new camera, you'll probably want to keep it protected and in good condition. This is especially true of compact or compact system cameras, which tend to have less substantial grip than DSLRs.

There are various ways to remedy this, but one attractive option is the form-fitting leather case. Custom designed for each camera model, these cases provide protection for the base and sides of the camera. In addition, they can improve grip, not only by providing a leather surface but also by adding extra depth to the camera's body so it sits in your hand more snugly.

I've bought several cases by a maker called TP from Jason's Photo Forest shop on eBay. You can also buy them on Amazon UK from seller Jason Cui. They're available for a range of models and often come in several versions, including basic half-cases with closed bases, more complex ones with access flaps for the camera battery and SD card, and two-piece designs in the style of 'ever-ready' cases. They're available in many colours, including blue, purple, yellow, pink and traditional black. You should expect to pay around £40 for one with an opening base, including postage.

Verdict

TP cases are beautifully made from good-quality leather. They're well designed, offer a decent grip and don't block any controls. They're especially well suited to CSCs and invaluable for protecting my Olympus OM-D E-M5 and E-M5 II, providing better grip without adding bulk. Obviously, they're not cheap, but over the lifetime of an expensive camera body, I think they're worth it.



OTHER OPTIONS

Many small cameras benefit from some additional grip, but leather cases are not always the best choice. For instance, with small compacts they'll often add disproportionate depth to the camera's body. So it's also worth looking around for other options to help keep your camera secure, such as add-on handgrips, either from the camera manufacturer or a third party. These might bolt onto the camera's baseplate, or simply fix onto the front with adhesive tape. Some grips come with built-in Arca-Swiss-compatible dovetail plates, which are especially useful if you use a tripod frequently. And remember, there's no substitute for using a wrist strap to keep a small camera secure!

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The latest photography kit and technique at your fingertips



1901 Fotografi's slim Steichen leather strap

£25.95 www.1901fotografi.co.uk

THE COMPANY 1901 Fotografi is a small firm based in the west of England that makes high-quality camera straps from good-quality leather. Last year, I reviewed its lightweight, adjustable Maitani strap (AP 27 June 2015) and was very impressed. Since then the company has gone from strength to strength, offering a wider range of products that are now also available from specialist photographic retailers as well as online. Alongside shoulder straps, 1901 Fotografi also sells wrist straps and slimline leather camera bags.

Described as 'a minimalist, very supple yet strong camera strap designed for real photographers', the Steichen is ideal for a larger compact camera system with an f/2.8 zoom, or a medium-sized DSLR. The main strap is made from thick, strong leather and is 11mm wide and 115cm long, although custom lengths can be ordered

on request for an extra £3. There's a sliding 22mm-wide pad to spread the load on your shoulder or neck. It's available in a choice of six colours, which includes black, light tan and various shades of brown. The one shown here is merlot, a rich shade of red-brown.

This is another product that probably counts as a luxury item, or a 'nice to have', rather than a necessity, but it's the sort of accessory that can make carrying around a camera much more pleasurable. It's certainly more interesting to have on your camera than the nylon straps that generally come with most cameras, and it's a top-quality, well-designed product that will likely last for years.

Andy Westlake



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Snapseed is available for Android and iOS, and can be used on smartphones or tablets



Nik Software has been developing a range of excellent plug-ins and standalone software for photographers since the 1990s. Most famous for its image-editing program Snapseed, the company was acquired by Google in 2012 and its focus was steered towards mobile image editing. The desktop version of Snapseed was dropped in 2013 and the mobile app began having bigger and better updates.

Skip forward to April 2015 and Snapseed 2.0 was released in the Google Play and Apple App Store. This new update was a complete overhaul. The user interface changed and the toolset became more comprehensive than ever, making it one of the most sophisticated editing apps available – all for free!

It's available on iOS and Android, and both versions work similarly across both platforms, with the same feature set. The interface is also consistent between tablets and phones. Once the app is open, users can edit images from albums on their smart device. When an image is open, there are a few options. By double-tapping the screen, users can zoom into the image and move around using the

Snapseed 2.0

- Free on Android and iOS
- <https://support.google.com/snapseed>

Callum McInerney-Riley tests Snapseed 2.0 – a free editing tool for your smartphone or tablet, offering one of the most comprehensive feature sets of any editing app

navigator in the bottom left of the screen. When zoomed out, users can toggle a histogram on or off in the bottom-left corner. In the top right is a menu that allows users to undo, redo, revert a recent adjustment, share the image, or look at the details of the file including camera, shutter speed, aperture and more. The most important element, though, is the Pencil icon in the bottom right, which marks all the editing functions available. These are in two sections: Tools and Filters.

Tools

In Tools there's Tune Image, Details, Crop, Rotate, Transform, Brush, Selective,



Using a Wi-Fi camera I can transfer, edit and upload an image in minutes

 **Spot Repair and Vignette.** The first tool I open, and probably the most important one, is Tune Image. This allows users to adjust the brightness, contrast, saturation, ambience, shadows, highlights and warmth. These can all be adjusted from ± 100 values by swiping your thumb left to turn the effect down and right to increase it.

Alternatively, there's an Auto Adjust button at the bottom that will evaluate and change the values it thinks suit the image. By dragging your thumb up and down, users can quickly access a different editing option. For example, if I were changing saturation, I could move my thumb upwards on the screen, select ambience and begin editing that. I find this makes editing very easy.

Under the Details section are two separate options called Structure and Sharpening. Sharpening makes the finer detail appear sharper, while the Structure is a bit like the Clarity slider in Adobe Lightroom, boosting local contrast to give the subject a more defined look. The Crop and Rotate tools are both self-explanatory, allowing users to free-crop or use a number of preset aspect ratios. The Rotate tool allows you to correct the tilt angle of the image left or right. Transform is a little more



BEFORE

advanced, with the ability to adjust vertical and horizontal perspective, as well as rotate. However, the best thing is that when you adjust the perspective and the image moves out of the crop zone, Snapseed will automatically fill those areas. It samples areas nearby to generate new content rather than leaving black space.

On the whole this feature works really well, and if something looks amiss you can tidy it up using one of the other tools, such as the Spot Repair brush. Just like the automatic fill, this brush samples the area and generates content to replace it. This is useful for removing unwanted objects in landscapes or blemishes on skin.

The Brush tools allow users to dodge and burn, adjust exposure, colour temperature and saturation, selectively using a brush and painting the area with a stylus or a finger. Users can select how harsh or strong they want the effect and then brush it on, and also erase the areas they don't want to see the adjustment on. Selective is



In the top right of the screen, users can toggle how the edit looked before and after. There's also a question mark in the top left that allows users to have a quick demo of each of the settings

AFTER

Brightening the shadows, darkening the highlights, adding some more contrast and adjusting the tonal contrast really made this image pop. I then used the KK2 filter in VSCO to give a better colour tone

another tool similar to the brush. However, this tool allows users to selectively adjust the contrast, saturation and brightness of a circular area. By using a pinch gesture, users can select how big or small they want their circle to be and then make an adjustment exclusively inside that area.

Vignetting allows adjustments of both outer and inner brightness, giving users the ability to either add or correct vignetting.

Filters

Inside the Filters section are 12 options, but strangely, they're not really what you would consider filters. There's Lens Blur, Glamour Glow, Tonal Contrast, HDR Scape,

Drama, Grunge, Grainy Film, Vintage, Retrolux, Noir, Black & White and Frames. They all work in a similar way, giving users the ability to tweak them up and down, controlling things such as saturation, vignetting and brightness. Overall, I find the Filters to be fairly weak compared with other apps. While I sing the praises of Snapseed for its core editing function, I always transfer my Snapseed-edited images into my VSCO Cam app to give it some colour toning.

The Lens Blur feature allows users to selectively blur areas to make it look out of focus, and this can be controlled and adjusted; it can also be moved

to be either circular or straight. Glamour Glow smooths everything out and makes everything glow – a very similar effect to a soft focus filter or a tacky 1980s pop video.

HDR Scape adjusts the dynamic range and sharpens the image to give an HDR effect. Frames is fairly self-explanatory, giving users the ability to add frames to their images. I saved the best for last –

Tonal Contrast. I use this on most of the images I edit in Snapseed. It allows users to control the contrast of high, medium and low tones independently of each other. If there's an image where the main focal point is in the midtones, upping the contrast gives it a bit more punch.

Sometimes boosting the contrast of shadows or highlight can cause loss of highlight or shadow details. To combat this, Snapseed has included a Protect Shadows and Protect Highlights slider in the Tonal Contrast Filter editing options.

Once an edit is done, users can just select the little tick at the bottom of the screen to apply the change. Each change is saved in a history log, and it's possible to go back and change each individual process at any time. Users can also delete any edit they have done at any point in the process. So, if I started by adjusting tonal contrast, but after making a couple of other changes found that it was a bit over the top, I could go back and rein it in. If I decided it wasn't needed, I could just go in and delete it without altering any of the editing I had done after I had made that change. This non-destructive working is a very advanced feature, and it's fantastic to see this level of editing capability on a free app.

AP

Our verdict

I'LL BEGIN with my limited points of criticism towards Snapseed. Primarily, the filters just aren't that good. There are lots of options for overcooked HDR and over-processed images, and it just lacks subtlety. I find that Instagram has a better range of filters than Snapseed. Personally, I don't find any of them actually improve the look of the original image. For toning, I export my images to the VSCO Cam app, which has a selection of beautiful filter presets with fantastic tones. I also find myself doing some split toning of shadows and highlights in VSCO Cam, which is missing in Snapseed.

While these few points are an issue, that's about it as far as criticisms go. The toolset the app offers is outstanding. Having tested many different applications, I find that the way it performs

tasks such as lifting shadows and dulling down highlights is about the best of any app. The feature set is far more advanced than many editing suites, and to have this for free on a mobile device is fantastic. I shoot with a lot of Wi-Fi-enabled cameras, and when I have a casual day out with my camera I pick one or two photos and edit them on my smartphone using Snapseed, then I give them a little tickle in VSCO Cam. Unless I have shot something really important, I don't need to transfer it to my PC/Mac and work on it extensively. Everything I need is right there in Snapseed. It's easy to use, has heaps of functionality and does a sterling job. And it's free!



Turning up saturation, ambience and contrast adjustment was sufficient here

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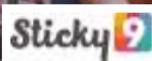
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Back-to-back lens connector rings

Q A really simple, useful and – amazingly for Leica M equipment – inexpensive accessory is the plastic ring that allows you to bayonet two lenses back to back so they can go on one cell in your camera bag without rattling together.

I would love to have the same thing for my Canon EF SLR lenses, but can't seem to find them on the internet. Maybe I'm using the wrong search terms. Can you help? **Julian Lloyd**

A As far as I'm aware, there is one back-to-back double lens cap for Canon EF available on the market, from Optech USA (optechusa.com/lens-mount-cap.html).

Unfortunately, it's not easy to find in the UK, and buying direct from the USA will likely cost almost as much in postage (and potentially import duty and VAT, depending on how many you order) as it does for the item itself.

The simple answer is to buy some cheap, generic rear lens caps and glue them together with an epoxy resin such as Araldite.

Andy Westlake

Old SLR cameras and equipment

Q Where would be the best place to try to sell old SLR cameras and other equipment, including lenses, filters and lights? I want to sell my father's extensive kit, and although I'm not looking to make a fortune I hate the thought of just throwing it away.

Julie Gaskin

A For selling second-hand equipment, you have a couple of options. One is eBay and the other is to go via a reputable dealer. They tend to be



Lenses for DSLRs

Q I have a Canon EOS 100D, a Nikon D90, and a Nikon D3200, but as a beginner I am unsure which lenses I need for them.

For instance, can I use an adapter to put a Canon EF-S 10-18mm lens onto my Nikon D3200? I have a Canon 18-55mm, 28-90mm and 75-300mm, as well as a Nikon 18-55mm, 35-70mm, 28-80mm and 70-300mm. Please could you let me know which lenses I do not need so I can sell them? I want to take photographs of wildlife, portraits and landscape scenery. **Keith Maxwell**

A I'm afraid there's no real way of using Canon lenses on Nikon DSLRs – they have to sit closer to the sensor than the Nikon lens mount allows, and use electronic

control for autofocus, aperture setting and image stabilisation. So the Canon EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS lens can't be used on your Nikon D90 or D3200.

Looking at the cameras and lenses you have listed, I'd get rid of the Canon 28-90mm but would keep the others for the EOS 100D. For the Nikons, I'd advise keeping the Nikon 18-55mm and 70-300mm zooms and get rid of the Nikon 28-80mm. As for the Nikon 35-70mm, it depends on exactly which version you've got as several were made with different maximum apertures. Those with constant f/2.8 or f/3.5 apertures are still quite useful, although they won't be fully compatible with all the features on your cameras. Cheaper variable aperture lenses – f/3.5-4.5 or similar – are rather less useful. **Andy Westlake**

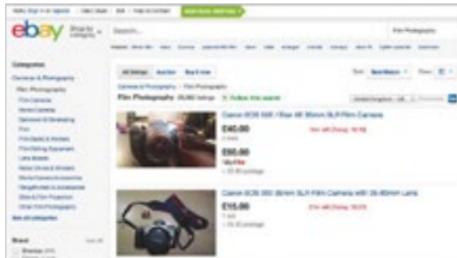
few and far between these days, but you'll still find a selection advertising for used kit in the back of this magazine each week.

They tend to be mainly interested in high-quality equipment, in good condition, that they can sell for a high enough price to

make a reasonable profit. Whatever you decide, it pays to do a bit of research.

First, identify as much of the equipment as possible, then search eBay and find out how much each camera/piece is likely to sell for (search on 'Completed Listings' – you may well need to create an account to do this). Then, if you find you have something desirable, you can either approach a retailer armed with the going rate, or list it on eBay knowing how much to sell it for (try 'Buy It Now').

If you find you don't have anything very valuable but you still want it to go to a good home, try giving it to a local



Get an idea how much your kit is worth by checking similar auctions on eBay

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Andy Westlake

Raw files won't open

Q I have a Canon DSLR and process images with Adobe Photoshop Elements 12. I bought the mirrorless Sony Alpha 5000 for my street/urban photography, as it is easy to use on the hoof and, importantly, it outputs raw files. So you can imagine my disappointment when, after my first shoot, I found that the raw (Sony call them ARW) pictures would not open in Photoshop Elements Camera Raw. Is there a plug-in? Also, will I have the same problem if I buy Photoshop Lightroom CC?

Bernie Hinton

A I'm afraid you've come across a common problem when buying a new camera – your existing raw processing program won't recognise the files. In general, only cameras that can record raw files using Adobe's DNG (digital negative) standard will always be compatible with older software.

However, it's possible that the most recent version of your existing software might support your new camera, so the first thing to do is find and run its 'update' function. If this doesn't work, help is at hand in the shape of Adobe's free DNG Converter program, which can take your new camera's raw files and convert them to DNG so your old software can read them. You can

You'll often need to update software to read raw files from newer cameras

download it from the Adobe website (www.adobe.com/downloads/updates.html).

Alternatively, any raw conversion program that you buy now – indeed, Lightroom – will support raw files from practically all cameras, aside from those announced very recently, which will likely get support added via free updates anyway.

Andy Westlake



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Zeiss Ikon Contina Ila

Ivor Matanle looks at two versions of a tough compact camera from the 1950s and '60s

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THE ZEISS Ikon Contina Ila was a tough compact camera produced in two very similar versions. The first, from 1956, had a two-range selenium-cell exposure meter, while the second, from about 1961, was designed with a single-range meter. The camera pictured is of the first type, identifiable by its slits in the hinged meter flap to allow light to reach the meter cell when it is used in low-light mode. The flap of later cameras is solid and caps the cell completely, and the meter is 'live' when the flap is raised. The Novicar or Novar lenses are three-element designs made by various European manufacturers with whom Zeiss Ikon had contracts – Steinheil and Schacht were among them.

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HOW IT WORKS

I am your

Ultrasonic sensor cleaner

I WAS first seen in Olympus's first DSLR, the E-1, launched in 2003. I am a sonic device that you can't hear me. I keep a camera's sensor free from dust and particles so images are free from blemishes. I am your ultrasonic sensor cleaner.

One of the perennial problems with digital sensors is that a build-up of static electricity attracts dust to the exposed filter in front of the surface of the sensor. Larger particles of dust will make their presence felt in the form of blurred blobs that stand out in your images. If the lens aperture is especially wide, they may become more blurred or even

disappear. This is due to the depth of focus dictated by the size of the lens aperture. If the aperture size reduces, there will be a greater depth of focus and dust will become more sharply defined. It's especially bad for macro photographers who rely on very small apertures.

Until my arrival, the only way to deal with sensor dust was to use either compressed air or a blower to dislodge any dust, or clean the surface of the sensor filter using special solutions and brushes.

Olympus came up with the idea of vibrating the filter at very high frequencies in such a way that the energy in the vibrations would dislodge dust. Stick

patches inside the mirror box capture the particles.

The technique was clever as it used several piezoelectric transducers to set up a wave of vibrations in a relatively thin filter. The energy is at its highest at the wave peaks and, rather like when you shake a tablecloth at one end, the wave travels through the filter and flicks the dust away. Olympus patented the system and other camera makers had to make do with less effective alternatives, such as vibrating the whole filter without the wave effect. I was called the Super Sonic Wave Filter (SSWF); the vibration frequency at around 25kHz wasn't ultrasonic, but the frequency is inaudible.



Olympus's E-1 was the first camera with ultrasonic sensor cleaning



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TO COINCIDE with the launch of The Video Mode website, we're pleased to announce our new Amateur Filmmaker of the Year (AFY) competition. AFY challenges you to get creative with your filmmaking, and gives you the opportunity to win some fantastic prizes worth £10,000 in total.

The competition is split into three rounds, each with its unique theme: Nature, Time and Love. To enter, submit a video no more than five minutes in length, of HD quality. You can shoot on any camera you'd like, and the content and editing are up to your imagination – so long as it fits

the round's particular theme. Visit www.thevideomode.com to view the top videos, as well as the scores and a leaderboard for the overall competition. The winner will be the person with the most points after three rounds, who will win the overall prize as well as the title of Amateur Filmmaker of the Year.

Rounds and dates

Below is a list of the competition rounds, their themes and the dates you need to know. To view the results, visit www.thevideomode.com. When planning your entry, take into consideration the criteria of fulfilling the brief, creativity and technical excellence on which you'll be judged.

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Nature	1 Aug	30 Sep
Round Two: Time	1 Oct	31 Dec
Round Three: Love	1 Jan	28 Feb

The overall winner will be announced in April 2016

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Enter to win your share of prizes worth over £10 000! Here's what you could receive:

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Canon Legria Mini X, worth £329.99

Round Two

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, worth £2,499.99

Canon Legria Mini X, worth £329.99

Round Three

Canon XC10 (with 128GB CFast card and reader), worth £1,999.99
Canon Legria Mini X, worth £329.99

Overall prize

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In the bag



Picture editor at *The Times* turned landscape professional Paul Sanders reveals the essentials in his kit. www.paulsanders.biz

Fujifilm X-T1

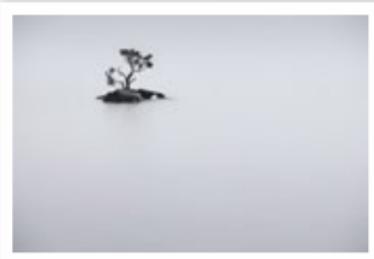
1 I switched from a DSLR to the mirrorless Fujifilm X-T1 because the handling, image quality and weight work for me. The X-T1's X-Trans sensor has incredible dynamic range and a wonderful smooth quality to it. It is important that the camera doesn't get in the way of my photography.

Fujifilm Fujinon XF50-140mm f/2.8 R LM OIS WR

2 This is the lens I use most. Optically, it's stunning, razor-sharp and light for the range of focal length and fast aperture. The compression I get from the longer focal lengths suits my image making, especially for my more minimal work.

Lee and Formatt-Hitech ND filters

3 Most of my work is long exposure, so neutral density filters are essential. I always carry a Lee 2-stop, 3-stop, 6-stop and 10-stop, and a 16-stop Firecrest by Formatt-Hitech. I often use the 16-stop and 6-stop to allow me to shoot wide open and still run exposure times around 8mins.



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FLM tripod

4 FLM tripods are light and strong, have legs that adjust very quickly and don't fill with water when I work in the sea. The engineering is incredible, especially the ball-and-socket head, as it has a variable tension to allow fine adjustments and the option of click-stop or smooth panning.

MindShift Rotation 180° backpack

5 I've used this rucksack for the past three years. I love the rear-panel opening and the fact that the base swings round, like a bum bag. I never have to take it off and can access every compartment while still wearing it by just rotating the upper or lower bag around my body.

List of kit Two Fujifilm X-T1 cameras, Fujifilm XF14mm f/2.8 R, Fujifilm XF23mm f/1.4 R, Fujifilm XF35mm f/1.4, Fujifilm XF60mm f/2.4 Macro, Fujifilm XF50-140mm f/2.8 R LM OIS WR lens, Lee ND2, ND4, ND8, ND16, ND32, Formatt-Hitech ND 2-stop, ND4-stop, ND8-stop, ND16-stop, ND32-stop, MindShift Rotation 180° backpack, lightweight waterproof jacket and trousers, hat and gloves



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8.0fps
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CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 5D Mk III Digital SLR Camera

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- *Total Digital Photography Magazine*

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- *Computer Upgrade Magazine*



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PGI72

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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'Retirement Plan 1', 2011, by Guilhem Senges



More and more, I am fascinated by just what a photograph *is*. The word 'tableau' is increasingly used for staged photographs, but its meaning is slippery. Andreas Gursky's famously expensive 'Rhein II' has been described as a tableau, which stretches any definition I can understand. But then, categories are of limited use when you are faced with a 120x220cm tableau pinhole picture taken with a converted van as a camera and a 20-minute exposure. In Senges' own words, he also uses 'temporary recycled sculptures or installations especially made for the photo session'. He also refers to 'mixing positive and negative in the same view' (www.guilhemsenges.com). Yes, that's what looks like, but how?

Then again, there is no great reason why we should be concerned with 'how'. Part of the purpose of this column is to inspire our readers, but few, if any, are likely to try to emulate this technique exactly, if only for the want of a camera van. Above all, the picture is the thing. It's not exactly collage, but the infinite depth of field of a pinhole camera, coupled with

'It's not exactly collage, but the infinite depth of field of a pinhole camera, coupled with its very low resolution, allows the photographer to play quite a lot of tricks'

its very low resolution, allows the photographer to play quite a lot of tricks with our depth perception and with what passes for 'real'. In any case, no photographer is obliged to tell us exactly how he or she did something – or, if they do tell us, to tell us the whole truth.

The 'whole truth' is an important phrase here. The detail, the lighting, the tonality, the pinhole-style resolution – all are wholly 'photographic'. Even the most skilled photorealist or hyperrealist painter would find them extremely hard to replicate. In other words, the 'whole truth' of photographic technique is undoubtedly here. But equally, we know that 'real' pictures – even staged tableaux of bank robberies – don't look like this: so no 'whole truth' there.

It is very much a 'gallery' picture, because few of us would have enough space on our walls to hang it, even if we

wanted to. This brings us, though, to another question: what is photography *for*? The answer is that it can be for anything: advertisement, ornament, instruction, news, aide-mémoire, a portrait of a loved one, or (as here) a direct challenge to our perception that makes us think.

Which invites yet another question. What does it make us think about? This, perhaps, is the true strength of this picture. It invites thought about so many things. You can start out with whether or not you like it. Many will stop here. You can ask yourself why you like it or dislike it. Then you can think about the nature of reality, especially as 'recorded' photographically: I put 'recorded' in quotation marks because that is open to interpretation, too. As is why someone should convert a van into a pinhole camera.

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. Next week he considers an image by Jean Gaumy



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